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Portals and Pathways

A Review of Postsecondary Education in Ontario

Report of the Investing in Students Task Force

February 2001

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The Report of the Investing in Students Task Force and the Supporting Documents are available in Adobe portable document format (pdf) on the Web site of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities: ***http://www.edu.gov.on.ca***

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Supporting Documents to the Report

These documents are available under separate cover.

Best Practices in Ontario and Other Jurisdictions

Annotated Case Study Bibliography on Administrative Best Practices in Postsecondary Institutions
Investing in Students Task Force, January 2001

Compendium of Innovative Administrative Practices in Ontario Universities and Colleges
Investing in Students Task Force, January 2001

Best Practices in the United States and England: A Review for the Investing in Students Task Force,
Howat Noble & Associates Inc., November 2000.

Aligning Incentives with Efficiency and Effectiveness Outcomes,
Peter Van der Laan and Margaret Rodrigues (Senican Consulting Services) December 2000

Resource Document

Summary of Proposals
Investing in Students Task Force

Summary of Roundtable Discussions
Investing in Students Task Force

Summary of Stakeholder Meetings
Investing in Students Task Force

Student Experiences and Priorities: A Survey of Ontario Colleges and Universities
Erin Research Inc. for the Investing in Students Task Force, January 2001

Financial Health and Administrative Cost Effectiveness Comparisons for Ontario's Universities and Colleges, 1998-2000
PricewaterhouseCoopers, January 2001

INVESTING IN STUDENTS TASK FORCE
Le groupe d'étude sur l'investissement au service des étudiantes et étudiants

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The Honourable Dianne Cunningham
Minister
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Dear Minister:

The Task Force on Investing in Students is pleased to submit to you our Report, ***Portals and Pathways: A Review of Postsecondary Education in Ontario.***

This Report responds to your request for the Task Force to examine current college and university administrative operations to ensure the accessibility, accountability and affordability of the system in the future. We considered how current and future investments in the postsecondary sector could best benefit students and assist Ontario's colleges and universities in responding to the new challenges they face in this period of rapid growth.

The Task Force consulted with and received submissions from hundreds of stakeholders. The Investing in Students Web site provided information and extended invitations to student and faculty associations, institutions, and communities. We received 129 proposals and 472 submissions on innovative practices, collaborations and suggestions for change. We met with almost 500 people and heard from over 800 students who responded to the student survey.

The Task Force was overwhelmed with everyone's generosity and willingness to accommodate the very tight schedule for participating in Roundtable discussions and meetings during our four-month mandate. This Report reflects the enormous contribution and interest of all stakeholders in ensuring the accessibility, affordability and accountability of postsecondary education institutions in Ontario.

Respectfully,

Jalynn Bennett	Jean Bédard	Rod Fraser	Ray Ivany	Courtney Pratt
Chair	Member	Member	Member	Member

Investing in Students Task Force

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Both the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO) and the Council of Universities of Ontario (COU) were instrumental in providing valuable input and acting as sounding boards at various points in the data collection/analysis phase of the Task Force initiative. In particular, we wish to thank for their thought-provoking and continuous participation: Susan Bloomfield, Chair of Board of Directors, Howard Rundle, President of the Committee of Presidents, Joan Homer, Executive Director, Pam Derks, and Peter Wright of ACAATO. From COU the Task Force extends thanks to Ian Clark, President and Chief Executive Officer, and Peter Mercer, Vice President Administration & Legal Counsel, University of Western Ontario, and the Council of Senior Administrative Officers (COU) for their dedication to developing constructive proposals, for their time, helpful expertise and leadership.

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The Task Force acknowledges with appreciation, the significant contributions made by the Investing in Students Project Team under the direction of Glenna Carr, Executive Project Director, and Wendy Joyce, Project Coordinator. Without their vision, skillful leadership and tenacity, the Investing in Students project could not have been completed in such a comprehensive manner within the four-month time period.

All Project Team members made significant professional and personal contributions to this Task Force Report:

Barry Pervin, Director, Ministry Secretariat, MTCU
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Mariette Carrier-Fraser, Francophone Consultations
Joanne de Boehmler, Administrative Operations
Valerie Tourikian, Administrative support
Maia Yarymowich, Administrative support
Lisa Chapman, Administrative support

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Jalynn Bennett
Jean Bédard
Roderick Fraser
Ray Ivany
Courtney Pratt

Executive Summary

Ontario postsecondary institutions face many challenges as global competition for talent and investment increase, technology and e-learning continue to change how and where students learn, and students become more demanding consumers of education.

How Ontario responds to these challenges will determine how well our students and institutions succeed in the future, and provide the foundation for growth and continued success. Maintaining the *status quo* will not prepare us for the future. We must continue to "raise the bar" in postsecondary education through innovation and the pursuit of excellence.

A CONTEXT FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Ontario has historically had higher participation rates in postsecondary education. The next five years will bring significant increases in enrolment of 88,000 more students. The changing mix of revenues over the last decade has resulted in students paying a greater share of the costs of their postsecondary education and institutions seeking more non-government sources of revenue. While the administrative operations of Ontario institutions have been responsibly managed and cost effective compared to other jurisdictions, we have reached a crossroad. The postsecondary sector will face many challenges as it tries to handle the record number of students who will soon enter the system—institutions are ageing, faculty are retiring, and technology requirements are up.

Individual institutions have been cost effective and innovative, but future efficiencies must be achieved on a system-wide basis. There is a need for system-wide investment in technology, improvement of student-centred services, and collaborative ways for developing and delivering services. To meet growth needs in the future, additional sources of revenue beyond tuition fees will need to be found.

Meeting the Needs of Students

NAVIGATING THE PORTALS AND PATHWAYS

...Creating a Seamless System

Students enter and move through the postsecondary system using a variety of routes. The "entry portal" through which they initially pass involves obtaining information on admission requirements, submitting applications and registering. Once in the system, they change directions by passing through different "nexus portals," or transfer points—a process that may involve switching programs or transferring credits. Students in the system also rely on a number of ancillary services—from accommodation services and bookstores to career counselling—to guide them through their postsecondary education.

Good decisions contribute to a successful experience for the student in postsecondary education. Students need to have access to the right information at the right time in order to make the best decision for their future. The top priority identified by students was "one-stop-shopping" for registration, information, student services and financial assistance in an on-line single entry portal.

Current arrangements for transfer are a burden on individual students as they move in and within the postsecondary education system. All students should be able to build on their education at any point in their lives and careers without duplicating their investment. Ontario needs to accelerate the available skills, knowledge and talent for the future. The transfer arrangements supporting Ontario postsecondary institutions should facilitate responsive student service, life long learning and the development of emerging skills for the benefit of our economy and communities.

Students are generally satisfied with the level of services they have received. However, some services have suffered over the past few years of change and reductions. Future investments must focus on quality in the provision of student-centred services.

ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE EDUCATION

...Easing the Financial Burden for Students

Postsecondary education poses a financial burden for many students and families. For many students moving on to higher education, this is the first time they will be paying for tuition, books and accommodation. The majority of them must rely on student financial assistance in the form of loans, bursaries or scholarships to cover their costs and they will bear large debt loads upon graduation. Students, institutions, parents and financial organizations share concerns about how students receive and repay financial aid as they enter and exit postsecondary education.

To support the decisions that students must make, financial information, guidance and advice should be available much earlier to students and their families and easily accessible through the "one-stop entry portal." It is important that the federal and provincial governments work together to ensure that financial assistance policies can be simplified, co-ordinated and harmonized.

Students need certainty in their financial plans and how they are going to responsibly manage the debt that they are taking on. The timely treatment of applications and payments will help students when they are in the system and good financial advice, counselling and communications will help students when they embark on their future path.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR E-LEARNING

...24/7 Solutions

While e-learning is viewed as an important delivery channel, the need for traditional classroom learning will continue.

The virtual classroom, Web-based administrative and student services, digital libraries and other new technologies, all require significant investment. Both the federal and provincial governments can play a leadership role in supporting the necessary investments in the hard infrastructure to support e-learning. Investments in building shared technology platforms will enable administrative efficiencies in the handling of student accounts, registration, applications, transcripts and administrative functions. These investments will also enable the delivery of e-learning, anytime, anywhere.

There are many opportunities to work collaboratively on infrastructure, curriculum development and the methods and practices to provide support for the learner and the teacher. The provincial government can play a leadership role with institutions in sharing best practices, developing cost effective benchmarks for service support and facilitating collaborative efforts in curriculum development and shared technology platforms.

Challenges Facing Institutions

MANDATES AND MISSIONS

...Still Evolving

In recent years, Ontario's postsecondary education sector has evolved to meet changing priorities—regional and national, domestic and global, social and economic. Ontario's postsecondary institutions face many challenges and opportunities as global competition for talent and investment increase, technology and e-learning continue to change how and where students learn, and students become more demanding consumers of education. The pace of change has accelerated and the ability to adapt, evolve and be viable is vital for future success.

There is a need to expand the vision for the 21st century by recognizing the differentiated missions for postsecondary education institutions and supporting them through goals, actions and investment. Polytechnical and other specialized institutions could foster advanced training and skills. Funding mechanisms should facilitate collaboration within the postsecondary sector, particularly in those communities where this is critical to their survival. Targeted funding will permit full access to educational opportunities for special populations, such as francophone and aboriginal students.

A NEW COLLEGE CHARTER

...The Pathway to the Future

Ontario colleges have been a success story for postsecondary education in Canada. When they were created 35 years ago, the government saw a future role for them that would be unlike other postsecondary institutions in Ontario, Canada, North America or even the world. In positioning for postsecondary growth in the 1960s and 1970s, Premier William Davis saw a future for colleges and universities as working cooperatively, each with its own distinct role, to support the social and economic needs of Ontario. The success of Ontario colleges is a testament to that original vision. The Task Force built on this founding vision and projected it into the future. Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology continue to be integral to community, economic, and social development and contribute to provincial prosperity.

The Ontario Jobs and Investment Board echoed this original vision and projected the colleges' success into the 21st century under a new College Charter. This new College Charter should acknowledge the differentiated missions for individual colleges with a province wide strategy and goals for the total postsecondary sector. It enables full partnership between colleges, business, and community. It encourages full cooperation between colleges and universities, recognizing their distinct missions. It sets out clear expectations for performance, roles and responsibilities as the basis for a strong accountability relationship between the colleges, their stakeholders and government.

The Task Force proposes a "pathway" for the successful implementation of this new College Charter. Colleges would continue their evolution as non-profit corporations, generating revenue through new partnerships. College boards would be fully responsible and accountable for governance. This pathway sets out an action plan for transition from the *status quo* to the new College Charter by 2003.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

...Cutting Through the Clutter

Governing boards ensure that the strategic vision is in place for their institution. Increasingly, governing boards must have the skills, knowledge and experience to oversee the implementation of a strategic vision for the large and complex institutions they preside over. Students are more than participants in the system. Their perspective must be heard and considered. That can be done most effectively when they have a place at the table.

It is important that publicly funded institutions have a clear accountability framework within which to operate. All elements of the framework need to be linked from the publicly stated goals and objectives, to the institutional mission, to the requirements for an annual public report, to relevant and comparable performance measures, and to the application of best practices using benchmark information. Whatever performance measures, indicators or benchmarks are developed for Ontario, they must enable international comparisons with the best institutions in the world.

An annual public report by institutions should contain information on mission, key strategies and accomplishments, outcomes on performance indicators and student benefit and audited financial statements. Multiple reports should be reduced and consolidated. A common source of information should be used to prepare reports. And, Ontario governors and government must be able to use reports to assess and compare the financial health of the postsecondary sector and of individual institutions.

Jump-Starting Transformation

THE NEXT WAVE OF COLLABORATION

...Building on the Successes of the Past

The need for collaboration is well understood in Ontario's postsecondary sector. Many of the proposals submitted to the Task Force demonstrate successful collaboration and indicate interest in pursuing new kinds of collaboration, regionally or provincially. Postsecondary students, staff, administrators, presidents and governors agree that there are opportunities now to pursue transformational projects that result in real change that is sustainable over the long term.

Transformational collaborations can improve student service, ensure better use of existing facilities, increase purchasing power, improve specialized resources, and help coordinate delivery, development and implementation of compatible infrastructure. They can also lead to cost containment or cost avoidance.

INCENTIVES FOR CHANGE

...Adopting Best Practices

Individual Ontario institutions have developed efficient and innovative practices that could, if adopted system-wide, achieve cost savings of up to $74 - $88 million. This range of savings is consistent with the proposals submitted to the Task Force and research commissioned.

Many of the future pressures facing postsecondary education will require collaborative solutions that will provide the conditions for continued growth, success and excellence in postsecondary education, in communities around the province and in the economic health of Ontario.

To encourage the postsecondary sector to adopt best practices and innovative approaches, the Task Force proposes the creation of a Transformation Incentive Fund. This will encourage and accelerate the pace of change and will benefit students directly.

Introduction

The Investing in Students Task Force was established in September 2000 to advise the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities on ways to ensure that public funds are directed at providing the highest quality education for students while ensuring access, affordability and accountability. The Task Force was to examine best practices in administrative operations and related expenditures in Ontario and other jurisdictions.

The Task Force was comprised of five volunteer members and an Executive Project Director who provided support to the Task Force and direction to the project team.

Its mandate was to:

1. Advise the Minister on ways to ensure that public funds supporting postsecondary education are directed at providing the highest quality of education while ensuring access for students, affordability and accountability. In conducting this review the Task Force will examine best practices in Ontario and comparable initiatives in other jurisdictions.
2. Develop recommendations that give full consideration to the significant role that postsecondary institutions play in their local communities, the need to maintain service in local communities while assessing how service delivery may be made more effective, and the need to continue to offer postsecondary education opportunities in English and French in all regions of the province.
3. Examine options for shared services, finding "best of class" examples of service provision and looking for administrative applications elsewhere in the postsecondary education system, concentrating on issues of common service delivery and good administrative practices (e.g., information technology, procurement and data collection).
4. Recommend ways to ensure a continuing focus on best practices and their implementation so that current and future spending is directed to meeting the changing needs of students.
5. Seek the views of students, postsecondary institutions, faculty and staff associations, local communities, business groups, and other organizations as appropriate to ensure a broad, system level perspective is obtained.
6. Solicit proposals from institutions on ways to increase administrative efficiencies through shared services, administrative collaborations, or other activities, while maintaining access and ensuring affordability and accountability. The Task Force may also provide advice to the Minister as appropriate.
7. Ensure proposals are accompanied by a strong business case and will develop criteria for such business cases.

The timeframe for completing the project was September 2000 to January 2001. The Task Force's Report to the Minister addresses all aspects of the Task Force's mandate. It should be noted that the Task Force mandate did not include an examination of academic programs, funding policy, allocation of funds, or current operating budgets. The section of this Report, entitled "Meeting the Mandate" provides the full terms of reference and the accomplishments against each item.

The Task Force Approach

The Task Force took a multi-track approach in order to identify the essential issues. The Task Force commissioned a student survey, conducted research, invited proposals and examples of innovative practices and held consultations.

Student Survey

Throughout the project the Task Force strove to ensure the voices of Ontario students were solicited and heard. The Task Force welcomed the candour, energetic enthusiasm, and bright, forward thinking ideas that students expressed during meeting sessions. The Task Force heard from students at numerous meetings with student groups and association representatives. Invitations for student proposals and submissions were extended through the creation of the Task Force Web site and directly to student associations. Three college and university student-centred Roundtable discussions with participants from across Ontario were held, and student issues were also addressed at other Roundtables. To ensure a solid baseline for the student perspective, the Task Force commissioned a survey of 800 postsecondary education students from all regions in Ontario. In this Report "The Voice of Students," including direct quotes, is captured throughout as a way of maintaining and focussing on the key messages Ontario students identified.

Research

The Task Force's research built on the existing foundation of the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board Report 1999, the report of the *Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education: Excellence, Accessibility and Responsibility 1996*, and reports from the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO), Council of Ontario Universities (COU), and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

The Task Force conducted research on best practices in Ontario and other jurisdictions and a financial review of the postsecondary institutions in Ontario. On examining best practices, the Task Force commissioned studies—"Aligning Incentives with Efficiency and Effectiveness Outcomes" and "Best Practices in Colleges in the US and England." In addition, the Task Force prepared an annotated case study bibliography of best practices in administration from other jurisdictions and compiled an inventory of innovative administrative practices in Ontario universities and colleges. In all, there are 94 case studies and 472 Ontario examples. These studies are available in a supporting document to this Report, *Best Practices in Ontario and Other Jurisdictions*. The Task Force commissioned Pricewaterhouse Coopers LLP to conduct a financial review of postsecondary education in Ontario. Its report, *"Financial Health and Administrative Cost Effectiveness Comparisons for Ontario's Universities and Colleges 1998–2000,"* is available in a supporting document to this Report, *Resource Document.*

Proposals

On October 17, 2000, the Task Force solicited proposals on ways of improving administrative efficiencies via shared services or collaborations "while maintaining access and ensuring affordability and accountability." French and English guidelines were made available on the Investing in Students Web site and/or were sent to colleges and universities, business and community organizations, and student/faculty/staff associations. In all, the Task Force received 129 proposals from student groups, institutions and other organizations. An overview of the proposals received is in Appendix E, and the summary listing of all proposals is in the *Resource Document*.

Consultation

The consultation track was one of the most intensive and personally rewarding commitments that the Task Force undertook. The opportunity to hear first hand what is working well, what needs improvement and what are the priorities for change—expressed by students, postsecondary education administrators, faculty and governors, and community and business partners—had an undeniable impact on our perspective.

From November 2000 to January 2001, the Task Force held 20 Roundtable discussions with 168 participants made up of postsecondary education students, college/ university governors, administrators, faculty, francophone and northern region representatives and community/ business organization representatives. These Roundtable discussions provided a vehicle for many to be heard: the voice of students, the voice of postsecondary education institutions (francophone, aboriginal, English, rural, northern and urban), and the voice of community and business partners. These Roundtables resulted in a lively examination of thorny issues affecting postsecondary education students, ranging from student financial aid and entering the postsecondary education system, to e-learning, red tape, governance and accountability within the system. A full list of Roundtable topics is in Appendix F, and the summary of the discussions is in the Overview of Roundtable Discussions, in the *Resource Document*.

As part of the consultation, the Task Force also met with many stakeholders. While the majority of the 50 stakeholder meetings took place in Toronto with teleconference links, the Task Force also met with student groups in Waterloo and Ottawa, and with northern institutions in Sudbury. The Task Force had an opportunity to meet with aboriginal, northern and francophone representatives, in addition to college and university students and administrators. Regular meetings with associations such as ACAATO, COU and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities provided useful input. The Task Force met with student association representatives from the Ontario Community College Student Parliamentary Association (OCCSPA), the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) and the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario (CFS-O). Meetings were held with community organizations and business associations. The Task Force participated in facilitated discussions on the college charter with representatives from postsecondary education institutions, the Council of Regents and expert advisors. A summary listing of the meetings held is in Appendix G, and summary notes of all the meetings are in the *Resource Document*.

The results of the Task Force student survey, research, proposal and consultation tracks was a high degree of engagement and keen interest, demonstrated by cooperation and the stunning volume of proposals, best practices and submissions received in four months.

Proposals Received	Best Practices Received	Roundtable Participation	Stakeholder Meetings	Student Survey
129 submissions	472	▪ 20 Roundtables ▪ 13 Topics ▪ 168 Participants	▪ 50 Meetings ▪ 321 Stakeholders	▪ 800 Student Respondents
▪ 63 College ▪ 30 University ▪ 9 Joint Proposals ▪ 4 Student Assns ▪ 23 Bus/Cmty Organizations	▪ 239 College ▪ 182 University ▪ 51 System-wide	▪ 20 College students ▪ 18 University students ▪ 1 Secondary School Student ▪ 56 College Reps ▪ 53 University Reps ▪ 20 Cmty/Bus Organizations†	▪ 145 College Stakeholders ▪ 102 University Stakeholders ▪ 68 Student Assocn Stakeholders ▪ 22 Francophone Stakeholders** ▪ 7 Northern Stakeholders** ▪ 6 External Bus/Cmty Organizations	▪ 400 College Students ▪ 400 University Students

* College and University Representatives include presidents, governors of boards, administrators, faculty and staff.

** College and University Stakeholders above include the francophone and Northern Reps in the total 145 and 102 count.

† External Community/Business Groups or External Postsecondary Education Institution Association Representatives include business associations, Chamber of Commerce (francophone), Boards of Education, Banks and Youth or Student Associations.

All 25 Ontario colleges, all 17 Ontario universities, three Ontario student associations and various business, community and external organizations were involved in some or all of the Task Force's multi-track processes through research, proposals and/or consultations. The Task Force was able to reach out and engage **489 key stakeholders** through a total of **70 Roundtable discussions and meetings**, all within a brief four-month consultation window. The **800-person student surve**y created an additional opportunity for student input, bringing the entire number of sources contacted to more than **1,289 postsecondary education stakeholders.**

Vision for Postsecondary Education

The Task Force often heard of the need for a clear vision for postsecondary education in Ontario. Most consider it important for the province to lead in setting the vision and articulating public policy objectives. Students want assurance of accessibility and affordability as priorities and demonstrated commitments to them. The public wants to know what to expect of public postsecondary education: cost, availability, quality assurance. Institutions can set their own plans with public objectives in mind.

We reviewed the commitments that have been made about postsecondary education in various public documents—the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Business Plan, the *Blueprint* document and the report of the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board. We have developed a working vision for postsecondary education that guided our deliberations and conclusions. That vision has the following elements:

Excellence	▪	in teaching, learning and research
Student-Centred	▪	responsive to the needs of a diverse student body
Accessibility	▪	every willing and qualified student will continue to be able to attend college and university
Affordability	▪	financial assistance for qualified students in need
Community	▪	social and economic benefit to communities and partners in regional economic development
Accountability	▪	accountable to students, parents and taxpayers
Global Orientation	▪	the need to compete on a global scale
Collaboration	▪	working together for the benefit of students

Most stakeholders readily identified elements of this vision. They also identified imperatives for future change. Student-centred services can be improved at individual institutions, but it will take system-wide platforms and co-ordination to respond to many student needs. More transparent and public accountability cannot be assured through the number of reports or special audits conducted. The ability to be a partner in regional economic development is weakened with "one-size-fits-all" policies on the part of government. Much can be done collaboratively by individual institutions; however, greater advances can be made with leadership, clear policy directions and incentives.

All are still coming to grips with the articulation and implications of such a vision for postsecondary education. This Report suggests some of these implications and makes recommendations to advance this vision.

A Context for Postsecondary Education

New challenges face Ontario postsecondary institutions in the 21st century. These challenges are broad and include global competition for talent and investment, higher expectations of students as educational consumers, and technological changes that are transforming how and where students learn. Ontario is not alone in facing these challenges, as many other jurisdictions are also considering what types of strategies they need to pursue to ensure the effectiveness and excellence in their postsecondary education systems. Ontario must respond to these challenges to ensure a strong foundation for growth that will allow for continued success in the future.

Trends in Ontario

Financial pressures have been a reality for all governments and sectors over the past decade. Each decision to reduce spending at one level has had an effect on other parts of the postsecondary education system. The federal government reduced transfers to the province, reduced research funds and significantly cut their purchase of training from the colleges. The provincial government reduced expenditures, leaving institutions to try to balance declining grants with policies to increase other sources of institutional revenue, including tuition fees. This has resulted in institutions increasingly looking for operating efficiencies and seeking other revenues, through partnerships, joint ventures and raising tuition and ancillary fees. Ultimately, students pay more for their postsecondary education.

There is increasing pressure on institutions to grow and explore new sources of revenue. With little room to expand the traditional sources of revenue—operating grants and student fees—many institutions are looking at other sources, including public-private partnerships, community cooperation in facilities management and program delivery and enhanced cooperation for the development and delivery of programs across the postsecondary education sector.

Enrolment—Significant Increases Expected

Over this same period, participation in Ontario's postsecondary system has been steadily rising, reflecting the growing importance of colleges and universities in preparing people, at all ages and stages, for success in the new economy. Over the last decade, enrolment at Ontario postsecondary institutions has increased by 12 percent to 436,864. (see Table 1, Appendix A.) Ontario has the highest rate of university education attainment in Canada and a higher average postsecondary attainment rate than other countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Statistics Canada places university education attainment for Ontario at 28 percent, and the rest of Canada at 26 percent. The OECD average is 16 percent. In addition, over 90 percent of Ontario postsecondary students obtain jobs within six months of graduation, according to the 1997 Ontario Graduate Employment Survey and the 1998/99 College Graduate Outcomes/Graduate Satisfaction survey.

The next five years promise to be challenging as institutions cope with record enrolment levels of approximately 88,000 new students by 2005/06. That surge in the student population will be the result of three concurrent developments: the elimination of the fifth year of secondary school education will more than double the usual number of high school graduates entering the postsecondary system in 2003; the 19 year-old population in Ontario is projected to increase by 18 percent by 2005; and the participation rate of the 18-24 year old population is projected to increase.[1]

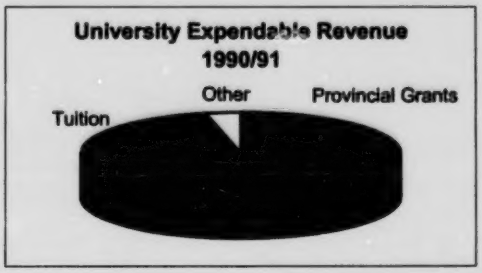
Revenues—the Changing Mix

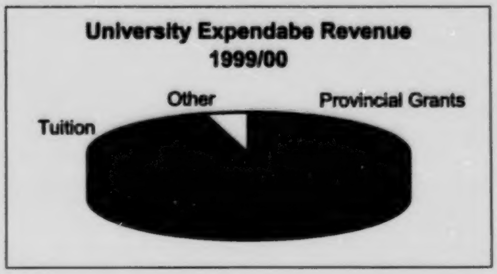
University revenue sources have shifted considerably over the last decade. Operating grants from the provincial government have declined, while tuition fees have increased and other sources of income have increased slightly. (See Chart 2, *University Expendable Operating Revenues in Constant 2000 Dollars,* Appendix A.)

Today, universities have more expendable revenues[2] than at any other time during the decade. While overall, revenues increased to $3.06 billion in 1999/00—an increase of 3.8 percent in constant dollars. However, on a per-student basis, in constant dollars (using the Ontario CPI), revenue per student has remained flat over the decade.

In its submission to the Task Force, the Council of Ontario Universities estimated that: "when one combines provincial grants, tuition and all other income together, the funding per student has decreased from $12,067 in 1990/91 to $11,869 in 2000/01 (expressed in 2000/01 dollars)—a real decrease of 1.6 percent."

During this period, government operating grants to universities have declined by 11 percent and when adjusted for inflation, the operating grant revenues per student have decreased by 29 percent. (See Table 3, *University Expendable Operating Revenues, 1990/91–1999/00,* Appendix A.)





University Expendable Operating Revenue in Constant 2000 Dollars $ Millions		
	1990/91	1999/00
Provincial Grants	2272.6	1675.3
Tuition	624.2	1305.8
Other Income	107.9	137.4

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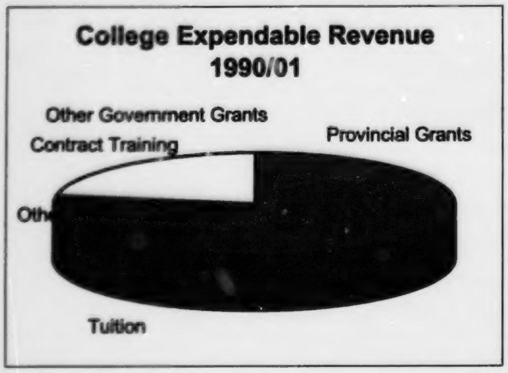
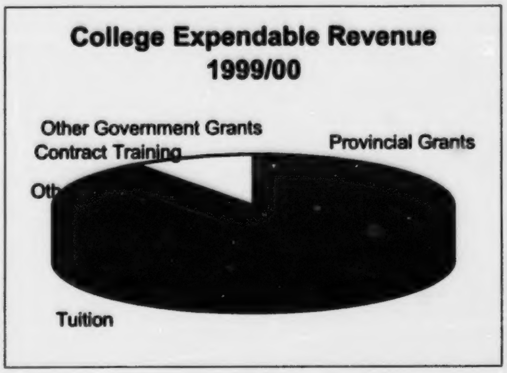
[1] Source: MTCU 2000-01 to 2005-06 increases based on a full time head count enrolment (full-time postsecondary, full-time tuition short, full time undergraduate and graduate students) Assumptions: part-time enrolment will remain constant, full-time head count is equal to Full Time Equivalent enrolment.

[2] Source: *Financial Report of Ontario Universities* prepared by the Council of Ontario Universities. Expendable revenues are those from the general operating fund of Ontario's universities, not just the level of operating grants provided by government. These include such sources as government operating grants, tuition and other fees, federal and municipal grants, donations and non-government contracts, investment and other revenues. Revenues from non-credit instruction are excluded. Unless otherwise indicated, revenues from ancillary fees are also excluded in this analysis since almost all of this revenue is tied to the operations of the ancillary operations.

As with universities, the "mix" of revenue has also changed over time for colleges. Total college expendable revenues have increased by $ 99.5 million, since 1990/91—a decrease of 11 percent in constant dollars, while on a per-student basis, in constant dollars (using the Ontario CPI), revenue per student has decreased by over 30 percent. During the same period, revenue from provincial government operating grants to colleges declined by 10 percent. When adjusted for inflation, operating grant revenues on a per-student basis have decreased by 42 percent. (See Table 6, *College Operating Revenue 1990/91 to 1999/00, Constant Dollars,* Appendix A.)

At the same time operating grants declined, the funding from the federal government for purchase of training programs also declined. Although tuition fees have increased, colleges have also increased other non-government sources of revenue, specifically contract training and other income, to help supplement their revenues. (See Chart 4, *College Operating Revenues in Constant 2000 Dollars* Appendix A.)


College Expendable Revenue 1990/01


College Expendable Revenue 1999/00

Colleges Operating Revenue in Constant 2000 Dollars
$ Millions

	1990/91	1999/00
Provincial Grants	949.7	706.1
Other Government	369.4	150.5
Tuition	191.6	430.3
Contract Training	75.8	101.1
Other Income	72.2	87.3

Expenditures—More Cost Efficient

Expenditure information is only available for the period 1990/91 to 1998/99. This lag in publicly available data means that our review of expenditure trends does not capture the most recent efficiencies or improvements. However, as we look over the last decade, we can see how the universities and colleges have responded to the pressures of declining revenues, increasing enrolments and the demands for service.

As we attempt to assess administrative cost effectiveness, we have looked at expenditures on a per-student basis and in constant dollars. We have examined only those administrative functions that would be considered part of our mandate and we have not included academic services, research or supplementary expenses.

Expenditure Per Student—Percentage Change over 1990/91 to 1998/99

	Universities	Colleges
Total Administrative Expenditures	4.7	-18.7
Student Services	33.3	-30.4
Physical Plant	-11.3	-34.0
Core administrative services	11.4	-15.7
Ancillary Services	3.2	10.1
Expenditures per full time equivalent student in constant dollars (see Tables 4, 7—Appendix A)		

Although universities have not reduced administrative expenditures to the same degree as colleges, 1998 data provided by the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO), shows that Ontario universities' spending on general operating expenses by function compares favourably with universities in other provinces. (See Chart 5, Appendix A.) Further, universities have had increases in spending in areas of direct benefit to students, such as library acquisitions and some student services.

Colleges have effectively reduced their operating expenditures per student. They have kept their administrative costs under control and are operating at a high level of efficiency, particularly on a per-student basis.

Financial Health and Cost Effectiveness of the College and University Sectors

The Task Force engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) to review the financial health and cost effectiveness of the postsecondary education sector.[3] PWC reached the following conclusions:

Fiscally responsible—Overall, the boards of governors and administrators of Ontario colleges and universities have responsibly managed the affairs of the institutions.

Cost effective—Spending patterns in functional areas of direct benefit to students compare favourably with other provinces. Ontario institutions can be considered cost effective in that the average spending on administrative operations is below the national average.

Benchmarking financial health—Currently, Ontario institutions do not have an accepted and standardized means of comparing their financial health with that of other Canadian institutions, or with institutions in the UK or the US. Developing comparable measures of financial health that can be used within the postsecondary sector and for comparison internationally would enable the Ontario postsecondary education sector to learn from other institutions.

Potential savings—Based on PWC's analysis, the estimated potential savings in the postsecondary sector could range from $74 to $88 million if regional or system-wide approaches to collaboration are used in purchasing or other areas.

Looking to the Future

Key Government Actions to Date

The SuperBuild capital construction plan has begun the process of building the physical capacity that Ontario postsecondary institutions will need to accommodate the expected increase in enrolment. The Facilities Renewal Program, which provides assistance for repair, maintenance and upgrades, was increased to $95 million to institutions for 2000/2001.

The government has also placed more emphasis directly on students in its funding of postsecondary education. Student support has been increased through the Ontario Student Opportunities Trust Fund. Average tuition fee increases have been capped at two percent per year above the maximum 1999/00 fee. And since 1996/97, the province has mandated that colleges and universities must set aside a portion of their revenue from tuition increases to provide student assistance, leading to a total of $125.3 million in 2000/01.

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[3] See *Financial Health Review and Administrative Cost Effectiveness Comparisons for Ontario's Universities and Colleges* 1998-2000, in the Resource Document, a supporting document to this report.

The government is also recognizing and rewarding academic excellence. It has committed $35 million to Aiming for the Top tuition scholarships, which will reward high school students with top marks who have financial need. Over the life of this program more than 10,000 students will benefit.

The Voice of Students

Ontario students are contributing a larger share of total institutional revenues today than at any time during the 1990s. Annual tuition fees for typical diploma college students have increased from $740 in 1990/91 to $1,718 in 2000/01. For typical university arts and science students, tuition fees have increased from $1,639 to $3,951 over the same period.

Students believe their debt loads are too high and that this has implications for the general accessibility and affordability of postsecondary education. The average repayable student debt load for a four-year B.A. university graduate receiving OSAP in 1998/99 was $20,496, while for a two-year diploma college graduate, it was $12,167. According to a survey of 800 college and university students commissioned by the Task Force, students are generally satisfied with services they receive, but not with the fees they pay for ancillary services, or the value they receive for certain services:

> *"There should be more things included in the tuition fees instead of every little thing being extra."*
> –Student survey participant
>
> *" Co-op services are $400 per term. We are not getting good value for our fees."*
> –Student survey participant

The Voice of Institutions

According to the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO) data for 1998/99, Ontario universities spend less than the national average for administrative and general expenses, but more on areas of direct benefit for students, such as student services and libraries. Universities are concerned about their ability to meet anticipated enrolment increases without an increase in government funding.

Colleges note their success in generating revenues from sources other than government operating grants. With their enrolments rising at a much faster rather rate than their revenues, colleges have achieved significant productivity gains. But without an attendant increase in government support, colleges are concerned about their ability to manage enrolment increases, particularly the significant influx expected over the next five years

> *"We have cut to the bone and have no flexibility left. Our administrative capacity and technology systems are maxed to their limit."*
> —College President

Future Directions

The postsecondary sector will face many challenges as it tries to handle the record numbers of students who will soon be entering the system:

- **Institutions are ageing**—Deferred maintenance stands at approximately $900 million in universities and $300 million in the colleges. This is a major pressure that cannot go unaddressed.
- **Faculty are retiring**—Many faculty will retire over the next five years, leaving a large gap in the number of positions that will need to be filled all at the same time. Attracting the talent needed to maintain high quality education is going to be a major challenge in both the college and university sectors.
- **Technology costs are high**—Both universities and colleges are grappling with the higher costs associated with using new technology in classrooms and pressures for distributed or on-line learning.

To fully meet the vision for postsecondary education, these pressures, and others, will need to be addressed. The Task Force has developed an estimate of the revenue required, based on current levels of operating funds per student, to accommodate the projected enrolment increase of 88,000 students by 2005/06.

Estimated Revenue Gap to Accommodate Postsecondary Students at Current Levels of Operating Funding

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Universities	$54 m	$108 m	$242m	$353 m	$351m
Colleges	$23 m	$ 36 m	$ 73 m	$119 m	$130 m
Total	$77 m	$144 m	$315 m	$472 m	$481 m

These estimates do not include the revenue required to deal with inflationary pressures; to increase investment in postsecondary education to match that of competitive jurisdictions; to maintain the existing physical plant; nor to deal with new and emerging needs, such as improved student services, investments for distributed learning technologies or the information technology to support innovation.

In recent years, declines in operating grants have been managed through increased tuition fees, increasing other revenue sources and administrative efficiencies. Any flexibility for individual institutions within the system to continue compensating for declining revenues is minimal. Current service levels for students must be improved, not just maintained.

Compared to others, the administrative operations of Ontario institutions have been responsibly managed and cost effective, but we have reached a crossroad. As the above table demonstrates, if not addressed, the revenue gap projected means that some of our institutions may not survive, let alone thrive. There are issues to consider and choices to be made as we look into the future. While Ontario postsecondary education has a past record of success and excellence, significant cooperation and system-wide change are required for the future. This Report provides the plan to allow us to start today to make the right decisions to ensure that innovative and cost-effective administrative practices and services are in place to support growth as we move forward into the 21st century.

Navigating the Portals and Pathways

...CREATING A SEAMLESS SYSTEM

Students enter and move through the postsecondary system through a variety of routes. The "entry portal" through which they initially pass involves obtaining information on admission requirements, submitting applications, and registering. Once in the system, they change directions by passing through different "nexus portals" or transfer points within the system—a process that may involve switching programs or transferring credits. Students in the system also rely on a number of ancillary services—from accommodation services and bookstores to career counselling—to guide them through their postsecondary years.

The Entry and Nexus Portals

Navigating one's way into the postsecondary system is not always easy. Researching, applying to and registering with Ontario's postsecondary institutions is often a time-consuming and frustrating activity that requires students to collect information from a variety of sources, process reams of data and complete substantial paperwork. When combined with reduced counselling and information services at secondary schools, the result is often students who are not well prepared to make sound decisions about their education. In some cases, the programs they apply to are not always the best fit and, as a result, students experience a difficult transition or simply drop out.

Today's students are adept and resourceful about finding and using information. What they need is access to timely, accurate information to make good decisions. Because there is no one-stop information service for Ontario's postsecondary sector, students have no ready-reference source for research on different institutions, applications and payment processes.

Many institutions are now making information more accessible on-line, through well-designed Web sites, and through support staff at the institution. However, the quality and quantity of information varies widely from one institution to the next, and follow-up calls are often required to get additional or comparable information.

When transferring from one institution to another—college to college, university to university, college to university, or university to college—the onus is on the student to determine which institutions recognize which credits. The College-University Consortium Council (CUCC) maintains a central database of all existing transfer agreements between colleges and universities. This database, the Ontario College-University Transfer Guide (OCUTG) indicates that there are 1,407 institutional agreements in place (642 university to college and 765 college to university). This database also has recorded over half a million inquiries from students, the public and others with an interest in postsecondary education.[2]

As Ontario prepares for the double cohort of 2003, the demographic "echo," increased participation rates of all learners and countless adult learners, there is an urgent need to streamline and simplify the process by which students review their education and career choices. Students and institutions alike are looking for more navigable routes into and through the system.

Although admission requirements remain the main factor in choosing a college or university, ancillary services (student housing, health centres and athletic facilities, for instance) play a role in ensuring that a postsecondary institution is a good fit, academically, culturally and socially. Ontario's postsecondary institutions offer an excellent range and quality of ancillary student services.

Students with special needs often require additional services in order to attend college or university. Like the broader student population, these students are looking for improved access to information, closer working relationships with secondary schools and increased funding. But these students have an additional set of special needs that may include wider access to adaptive technology devices, faculty and staff who are trained in meeting their needs and provision of special accommodation.

The Voice of Students

Students recognize that the better prepared they are before applying to a postsecondary institution, the more likely they are to succeed in their educational and career paths. A user-friendly application process that provides them with good information can guide them in making the right choices. It can steer them to institutions and programs that fit their needs, interests and qualifications. This, in turn, can cut down the number of 'false starts' that cost them, and the system, time and money.

Information Gathering and Sharing

Information is not always easy to come by. Students are faced with an overwhelming task when researching their postsecondary options. The volume of information about different institutions, programs and courses is staggering. Sorting through the mounds of information about accommodation and financial issues adds to the burden on students. Today's students and their families are hard-pressed to map out an educational plan that deals with all facets of their postsecondary experience.

The Transfer Process

Once in the system, students who want to change directions also encounter navigational problems. For students attempting to transfer from one program or institution to the next, the pathway is neither clear nor barrier-free. One of the problems is the *ad hoc* nature of so many individual agreements between institutions. The OCUTG data base helps with the research on credits and programs, and imminent upgrades to the database will make that research easier.

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[2] Source: CUCC Web site, January 12, 2001.

Students often apply to more than one institution because they are unsure which will grant transfer credits. This means they are paying for unnecessary applications. Quite often, students do not find out that their credits are not transferable until they have already started a program. As a result, transferring students are often forced to take courses that are very similar to ones they have already taken. An extra semester or year costs university students an additional $2,000 to $4,000, and college students an additional $850 to $1,700. The tuition fee is only one of many extra costs that can be incurred. The student may have housing costs, ancillary fees, or supplies, as well as lost potential income from employment.

> *"Transfer information should have been provided with my acceptance to the university. They should have told me what courses I would be given credit for when I was notified of acceptance. There needs to be better access to information about the transferring process, i.e. a telephone number or e-mail access."*
> –Student survey participant

> *I am having problems getting credit for a course I took in the summer time at another university.*
> –Student survey participant

The current transfer process requires students to initiate and negotiate the application. They also have to ensure that their transcripts are transmitted and that their credits are recognized when they move between institutions. The absence of a system-wide transfer process makes this a difficult, time-consuming and often costly proposition for students.

> *"I would like to see the way students are treated at the Registrar's office improved. I wanted to transfer but I didn't. I got no help."*
> —Student survey participant

Student Services

> *"Students need even more help to understand the path on which they are about to embark and the transition between secondary school and postsecondary education."*
> —Francophone Roundtable participant

A survey of over 800 college and university students commissioned by the Investing in Students Task Force shows that overall students are satisfied with the quality of ancillary services in colleges and universities. These include bookstores, cafeterias, health services and housing services. They are also generally satisfied with student services, such as academic and non-academic counselling and career services.

Overall Quality of Service Areas

Service	Mean quality score (0 – 100)		
	Colleges	Universities	Total
Personal Counselling	84	72	78
Health Services	80	75	76
Library, Print Resources	75	78	76
Library, Electronic Resources	76	75	76
Registration Process*	78	69	74
Athletic and Recreational Facilities	71	76	74
Application Process*	77	68	72
Labs, Equipment, Facilities	74	69	72
Career Counselling, Job Placement	74	70	71
Housing Services	72	71	71
Co-op Placements*	76	64	70

*Significant difference between college and university students.
SOURCE: *Student Experiences and Priorities*, Erin Research, in the **Resource Document**, a supporting document to this Report.

Over half the students surveyed identified their library resources as an institutional strength, though 20 per cent would welcome further improvements. Some institutions have reported higher spending on library resources in recent years as a result of increases in purchases to update holdings, including electronic ones. Although the cost of many library resources has increased, the majority of students surveyed apparently consider that investment worthwhile.

Students are not satisfied with some of the mandatory fees for services. In the Roundtable discussions held by the Task Force, students and administrators believed that there should be a transparent and fair process for determining fees and fee levels. The Ontario Community College Student Parliamentary Association (OCCSPA) has stated that information about the variety of fees and fee levels should be provided to all students, and that fees paid should be clearly identified on all receipts.

Perceived Value for Fees Paid on Services

Service	% Students that Paid a Fee	Perceived Value Score (0 –100)
Labs, Equipment, Facilities	13	62
Athletic and Recreational facilities	50	73
Career Counselling	19	64
Co-op Placements	66	50
Health Services	29	75

SOURCE: Student Experiences and Priorities, Erin Research Inc. in the **Resource Document**, a supporting document to this Report.

Many institutions operate special offices for students with disabilities. Technology enablers, assessment services and secondary school counselling are among the services to meet the needs of these students and improve retention. Five percent of students surveyed had used these services, and 83 percent expressed a high level of satisfaction with the services they received. As one respondent put it, "*Our Special Needs Office is wonderful at extending their hand; very well run.*"

The Voice of Institutions

Postsecondary institutions need to ensure that potential students have the information and assistance they need to make sound decisions. Institutions said that past reductions in funding had resulted in strained resources in areas like counselling and frontline services, particularly guidance counselling and student support services.

> *"We're feeling the pressure and stress of funding constraints. While we're maintaining the core mission of teaching, we're limited by lack of funding for non-academic areas."*
> —Roundtable participant

Institutions want students to make informed decisions about their education. When students know what programs are available and whether or not they have the necessary qualifications, they apply for programs in which they are genuinely interested. This results in a more positive and beneficial educational experience for the student, as well as for the institution.

Many of the opportunities for improvement identified by students were also noted by institutions. For instance, both students and institutions would benefit from giving students the ability to track applications on-line. This would give the student access to information and reduce the amount of queries to the registrar's office about the status of applications.

A Commitment to Improved Student Services

Student Counselling

Institutions concede that they are having difficulty in providing accessible and good quality services to all students who require them. The demand for these services will only increase in 2003, when the double cohort of students hits postsecondary institutions across the province, and more mature students and lifelong learners are also straining the capacity of the system.

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Raising the Bar on Information, Counselling and Advice

Proposals demonstrated innovative solutions to students' needs for counselling:

- **Career and Degree Planning Tool for Applicants and Students, University of Toronto** is a proposal that would enable students to access information and tools that can help them with their academic plan by providing information on degree programs and the course combinations that lead to a degree.
- **The Student Academic Success Centre, University of Ottawa**, building on the success of the Connexions Project, a proposal for the adoption of an integrated approach for support and advisory services to students. The project is a task force of students, professors and staff.
- **Access to College Education ACE, George Brown College and Centennial College**, is a student support and counselling service offered for applicants with potential to be accepted into a college program.
- **National Co-op and Student Internship Program Management** is offered by **Career Edge**, a not-for-profit organization initiated and supported by Canada's major employers. Career Edge provides the administration and management services for internships and co-op placements.
- **Building Students' Futures:** Career Strategies for Liberal Arts/Science Students is a partnership between Trent University and the Trent Centre for Community-Based Education to provide career counselling services.

Ancillary Fees and Services

The topics of ancillary fees and services on campus were raised by students, both in terms of how such services were determined and fees set, and also in the terms of availability and access to some services.

Raising the Bar on Services

Solutions to these issues can be found in individual institutions and system-wide as well.

- **E-business for Students, La Cité Collégiale**—proposal that focuses on new e-business tools that will enable on-line registration, fee payment, and the creation of financial accounts.
- **E-Commerce/Retooled Retail Campus Bookstore, Mohawk College**—a proposal to improve campus bookstore services through implementation of e-commerce and change in servicing and operational techniques.
- **Four Areas of Investment to Meet Increasing Demand for Student Services, Council of Ontario Universities**—one of the four areas is a proposal to determine how to establish basic benchmarks for student services.
- **Tcard, the Multi Application Student Card, University of Toronto**—a proposal to accelerate the introduction of a student card to serve as the permanent student identification and library card and which can be expanded to include other services.

Accommodating Special Needs

Institutions expect their student bodies to be increasingly diverse and inclusive, and they are prepared to accommodate students' special needs. They are investing in assistive devices and adaptive technologies, but also they recognize the need to have knowledgeable and dedicated staff on hand to meet the special needs of these students.

Raising the Bar on Special Needs

- **Implementation of Transition Program for Learning Disabled Secondary Students Entering Algonquin College**—a proposal to develop the smooth transition through the last two years of high school to allow them to graduate and proceed to college.
- **Read-E: Student Portal for Readings in Alternative Format at University of Toronto**—a portal for students with print impairments (vision, learning disabilities or physical disabilities).

Student-Centred Solutions—The Entry Portal

Applying for and registering at a postsecondary institution is a time consuming activity for students and their families. The student must find out about the institution, the courses and program offerings, the requirements for admissions, the fees associated with each program as well as incidental and ancillary fees.

Many Ontario institutions have information available on their Web site and have automated registration and enrolment systems. Brock University has a fully interactive Web registration system that allows students to work entirely on-line to register and confirm their course selections. The Ontario College of Art and Design also uses this registration system. There is a need for more of these student-centred initiatives.

Colleges and universities throughout North America are becoming more student-centred and moving away from institution-centred models. Several US institutions focus on students by giving them the tools to access information quickly and easily. For example, the CSU Mentor in California State University is a **student-centred information system** that provides outreach, pre-admission, admission and financial aid services. Secondary school students can use a student planner service to assess their options and identify the grades and courses needed for their choice of study. Twelve states have since adapted the successful program for their own institutions.

Raising the Bar on Student-Centred Information

The Task Force received many proposals from institutions that offered advice on how to meet student needs and be responsive to demands for relevant and accessible information.

- **The One-Stop Student Service Web Portal, McMaster University**—a proposal for an integrated student service portal that will allow students to access a wide range of course services and manage their student accounts.
- **Quality Student Service Project, Sheridan College**—a proposal for a project that will enable the college to provide a variety of student services (admissions, registration, financial aid, grades and academic advising) through a Web-enabled environment.
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Collaborative Approaches—The Nexus Portal

The current transfer process is not only time consuming for students, but also for administrators. Processing transfers and responding to transfer queries drains resources from Ontario's colleges and universities. Problems with the transfer process were cited by senior executives from colleges and universities in the Roundtable:

> *"Many simple and successful transfer agreements exist in other jurisdictions. The Ontario system is archaic in comparison."*
> –College President

> *"Ontario, more so than any other province,… has an antiquated system of transferability…. It is one of the great barnacles on the ship right now in terms of Ontario being able to move into some new ways of doing business."*
> –University President

Cooperation and collaboration in the postsecondary sector has been established as an objective since the introduction of the colleges of applied arts and technology in 1965. Then Minister of Education, the Hon. William G. Davis, envisioned a system of postsecondary education that was not a copy of the American junior colleges, but rather one of collaboration between institutions and that would be unique to Ontario.

Thirty years later, the Smith Panel on the Future Directions for Postsecondary Education, echoed the continuing vision of cooperation and collaboration in the postsecondary sector. The Investing in Students Task Force supports this founding vision of college and university cooperation, and sees opportunities for enhancing it to meet the new challenges facing the postsecondary system.

The College-University Consortium Council was created in 1996 to promote joint education and training ventures between Ontario's postsecondary institutions. The Council has negotiated a voluntary agreement between the colleges and universities—the Port Hope Accord—to provide guidelines and expectations for cooperation in degree completion agreements.

There has been progress over the last few years. Many institutions have developed innovative arrangements, some of which go beyond the guidelines of the Port Hope Accord. There is a level of activity and discussion in the sector as demonstrated by the submissions to the Task Force on innovative practices. A number of recent collaborations have broken down the barriers between colleges and universities and enabled students to move between institutions easily.

Made-in-Ontario Best Practice

- **York University and Seneca College opened the Seneca@York campus in September 1999.** Joint college and university programs are offered to students, who graduate with a combined Bachelor's degree/diploma in an average of four years rather than five or six.
- **Trent University has articulation agreements with Durham College and Sir Sandford Fleming College.** The university realizes a benefit through increased enrolment and by being able to maintain optimal levels of course choices and class size for students. The students are able to benefit from the strengths of more than one institution.
- **University of Guelph and Humber College signed a memorandum of understanding for the development of joint degree and diploma programs.** This agreement identifies how programs would be developed by the institutions recognizing the strength and difference of each. The collaboration can take the form of offering courses at each other's campus, beginning a degree at Humber and completing it at Guelph and jointly offering interactive technologies.
- **Sheridan College and York University offer a Bachelor of Design Honours degree**. This program combines the expertise of Sheridan College School of Animation, Arts and Design with the multi-disciplinary, theoretical and critical approach of the York University Faculty of Fine Arts.

Raising the Bar on the Transfer Process

- **Choice Based Curriculum Model at Georgian College** permits students choice, promotes transfer of credit, opens up the opportunity for multiple entry and exit points and demonstrates adaptability to student needs.
- **Ontario Electronic Postsecondary Transcript System** is a joint proposal of the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario, through the Ontario College Application Services, and the Council of Ontario Universities through the Ontario Universities Application Centre. The OCAS, OUAC and the Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology Committee of Registrars, Admissions Officers and Liaison Officers propose to eliminate or reduce the exchange of student paper transcripts between and within the sectors.

Future Directions

One-Stop-Shopping

The top priority identified by students was "one-stop-shopping" for registration, information, student and financial services. Coupled with a student-centred focus, an integrated approach would enable improved and timely information. While there are many examples of the use of technology and Web-enabled environments to create a "one-stop-shopping," it must be recognized that not all students have access to computers and may have different levels of computer skills. In addition, there are some parts of the province where there are limitations on the technology that is available and affordable.

Breaking Down the Institutional Boundaries

Although the boundaries between colleges and universities are being lifted in certain cases, there has been limited progress in achieving system-wide change. The percentage of students who succeed in making a transfer has not increased. The experience of those who do transfer is frustrating, time-consuming and costly. The timeframe for implementing the Port Hope Accord has not been met. Voluntary agreements and one of arrangements are not the way of the future.

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The experience in other jurisdictions demonstrates a focus and direction for student transfer and collaboration. The United States Department of Education estimates that during this decade, over 60 percent of all students will enrol in more than one school to earn a degree, and that technology and Web-based courses will accelerate this trend.[3] Many states and other provinces have mechanisms to facilitate transfer and support collaboration. See Appendix C for a summary of some existing arrangements. In fact, in some jurisdictions, such as New Jersey, performance funding is provided to institutions that meet or exceed the transfer benchmarks for the sector.[4]

The submissions made to the Task Force by colleges and universities on innovative practices suggest that there is a forward-looking vision for the sector as a whole. The instances of collaboration are increasing, they are reaching beyond the guidelines of the Port Hope Accord and, most importantly, they build on the strengths and areas of excellence of institutions. Rather than seeing a blurring of mission and mandate, the institutional initiatives clearly describe the different missions and mandates of each institution. It is through articulation agreements, memoranda of understanding and collaborative program offerings that the colleges and universities define what each does best. Moreover, when colleges and universities collaborate in this manner, it will benefit the student.

From the perspective of the postsecondary education sector as a whole, the future will demand increasingly new kinds of learning and education. The combination of applied learning, teaching and research will be important in certain areas of knowledge and skills. We can immediately identify the need for this combination in areas of health care and technology. The sector must be able to respond and move in these strategic directions. As we look at the introduction of technologies in distance learning, we realize that without a clear ability to provide for the movement of learners in and within the sector we will not realize the full benefit of investments. Recognizing the distinct areas of excellence of institutions rather than each trying to be all things to all students will provide Ontario with the skills, knowledge and minds for the 21st Century.

We cannot respond and move in new strategic directions with the current mechanism for transfer. Meeting the challenges of the future and pursuing new, strategic directions cannot be achieved with a mechanism that is driven, determined and made successful by the effort of individual students and individual institutions. Postsecondary students cannot continue to make their way along a path strewn with obstacles. That path must be cleared so that more students can move through the system easily, acquiring the knowledge and skills that different institutions have to offer and equipping themselves for multiple careers in a knowledge-based economy.

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[3] The State Supported Ohio College and University Performance Report: *Student Outcomes and Experiences, Ohio Board of Regents*, December 2000.
[4] New Jersey's *Plan for Higher Education: 1999 Update*.

Student Service Commitments

Today's students are also looking for more accountability and access to information. Whether they are people returning to college or university after years in the workforce, or looking forward to their future in preparing their minds as well as their opportunities, today's students want to make well-informed decisions and negotiate programs that work for them. As a result, institutions have become more student-centred and responsive by making good information accessible to students and sharing performance measures with prospective students more readily.

Many Ontario postsecondary institutions have established statements, codes and guidelines that lay out roles and responsibilities for students, faculty and the institution. Many also provide for student participation in governance and a complaint resolution process.

Made-in-Ontario Best Practices

- **Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU)** has entered into partnerships with students in the provision of student services. WLU has defined and formalized this partnership in different operating agreements with the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union and the Wilfrid Laurier University Graduate Students' Association. These agreements address issues of quality and service guarantees.
- **Laurentian University** has a Statement of Commitment to Students that explicitly provides for "fairness and high quality in the services which are offered to students, whether academic, administrative support or personal." The university is also committed to communicating with students and ensuring that their voice is heard on governance issues.
- **Ryerson University, Queen's University, University of Toronto and Durham College,** all have stated policies that no student will be unable to attend because of lack of financial resources.

Students, as users of the postsecondary education sector, expect service that is timely, responsive, at a perceived value for money and that inquiry information and complaint resolution is available to them. Other jurisdictions have embraced a commitment to quality in the provision of services to students.

In the United Kingdom, many institutions have established student service commitments. In addition, the National Department of Higher Education has also established a charter for higher education. It spells out what students can expect in the way of clear and accurate information about courses and entry requirements. Other jurisdictions that have a student service commitment are identified in Appendix B.

RECOMMENDATION: ONE-STOP ENTRY PORTAL

1. **Develop a one-stop entry portal that guides students to effective decision making about their postsecondary education.**

   This program should be a system-wide collaboration within the sector and should provide:

   - decision-making tools to assist in sorting out the vast amount of information
   - services through a range of media (on-line, interactive, in-person, and print)
   - pre-preparation programs

   The Ontario College Application Services and the Ontario University Application Centre should partner to provide the information and decision-making tools necessary for one-stop shopping research for students and families.

It is important that such tools and services be available to Franco-Ontarian students and involve French language institutions. It is important that such services be in place prior to 2003 to respond to the increased demands of the double cohort and demographic growth.

RECOMMENDATION: IMPROVED STUDENT SERVICE

2. **Make strategic investments in initiatives that improve student services in key areas of counselling, on-campus services, library services and services for special needs students.**

   These investments should:
   - involve students in their design and development
   - be collaborative with other institutions and/or the community
   - have the potential for application in other institutions

RECOMMENDATION: A SEAMLESS TRANSFER SYSTEM

3. **Assess and evaluate the existing mechanisms for transfer to determine how to move forward in the direction of ensuring available strategic skills, supporting the mobility of learners and preparing for e-learning and to identify the key elements of a framework for action.**
4. **Determine the necessary steps to implement this framework for action by 2003, set objectives for progress and monitor the achievement of those objectives.**
5. **Create a single, seamless, system-wide transfer system for the postsecondary sector that is comprehensible to students and institutions.**

   This should be developed collaboratively with government and institutions. This transfer system should be developed and managed by the College-University Consortium Council with a strong mandate to facilitate transfers.

RECOMMENDATION: STUDENT SERVICE COMMITMENT

6. **Each postsecondary institution should adopt a Student Service Commitment based on the following student guarantees:**
   - clear and accurate information about courses and entry requirements
   - efficient and fair handling of applications
   - prompt and efficient handling of applications for financial assistance and payment at the beginning of the first term
   - well-informed guidance from tutors and career staff and ready access to counsellors
   - accessible information about how well colleges and universities are performing, what services are available on-site, what facilities are provided for students with disabilities, and how courses will be taught and assessed
   - the opportunity for students to register their views

ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE EDUCATION

…EASING THE FINANCIAL BURDEN FOR STUDENTS

Postsecondary education poses a financial burden for many students and their families. For many students moving on to higher education, this is the first time they will be paying for tuition, books and accommodation. The majority of them must rely on student financial assistance in the form of loans, bursaries or scholarships to cover their costs, and they will bear large debt loads upon graduation.

Students, institutions, parents and financial organizations share concerns about how students receive and repay financial aid as they enter and exit postsecondary education. Eligibility requirements for aid and student debt loads are increasing. And higher fees, combined with the prospect of significant enrolment increases in 2003, are expected to put further strain on resources available for student financial assistance.

Annual Tuition Fees	**1990/91**	**2000/01**
	(per year)	(per year)
Average University Arts Degree (four-year)	$1,639	$3,951
Average Operating Grant	$6,100	$5,200
Average College Business Diploma (two-year)	$740	$1,718
Average Operating Grant	$5,624	$3,214

Source: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.[5]

Stakeholders agree that student financial assistance has a direct impact on the accessibility and affordability of postsecondary education. Many have expressed concerns about higher fees being a deterrent to pursuing postsecondary education, especially for students living in rural and remote areas, or those from francophone and aboriginal communities, where participation rates are generally lower.

Many factors influence students' choice to attend university or college, such as family socio-economic status, labour market conditions, perceived benefits of postsecondary education and availability of adequate financial resources. Access to financial assistance is a critical factor in determining whether students gain access to postsecondary education, especially for those with limited family resources.

Students apply for financial assistance, admission, and then registration usually through separate processes. The application processes and the information and counselling students receive prior to entering postsecondary institutions, constitute an "Entry Portal" to higher education. The "Nexus Portals" are the transfer points between institutions or between education and work. When students pass through the "Exit Portal" to pursue their careers or move on to another stage in their lives, they must repay loans accumulated through years of study. For many, the debt burden may appear crushing. The ability to repay it may be limited for students who leave without completing their degree or diploma, or who enter a tight employment market, or who have family support obligations. In 1998/99, the average student debt load for those borrowing on the Ontario Student Assistance Program was $20,496 for a university graduate with a four-year BA degree. The average debt load for a two-year diploma college graduate was $12,167 and $16,908 for a three-year diploma graduate.

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[5] All Data and statistics in this section have been provided by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Accessibility, Affordability and Accountability Issues

Reduced Government Funding

Reductions in public funding have gone directly to the bottom line for students. There are fewer student financial assistance recipients and, among those who do receive assistance, there has been a decrease in average assistance per student—all at a time when tuition has increased. The total amount of aid provided by the federal and Ontario governments has dropped from $1,713.8 million in 1996/97 to $1,226.8 million in 1999/00. Over that same period, the number of student aid recipients in Ontario has decreased by 15 per cent, from 201,014 to 170,636, through the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP).

Increased Institutional Aid

At the same time, Ontario government and institutions have been making other student aid resources available, funded largely by tuition fee increases that have been set aside since 1996/97 and through private sector/government matching programs such as the Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund. Since 1996/97, the province has mandated that colleges and universities must set aside a portion of their revenue from tuition increases to provide student assistance, leading to a total of $125.3 million in 2000/01. Each university or college financial aid office distributes this tuition set-aside assistance (30 per cent of additional tuition fee increases) to students as bursaries, scholarships, work study or summer employment. More than 72 per cent of these funds were spent on bursaries in 1999/2000.

Increased Burden on Students and Families

Students in Ontario pay among the highest tuition fees compared to students in other Canadian provinces. This is due in part to changes in both Ontario and federal government policy that have reduced the costs of postsecondary education to governments. Over the past five years, the amount of loan assistance available to students has decreased by $500 million, even though tuition has increased substantially. This cost is being shouldered by students and families, and also by postsecondary institutions, which must meet the gap between loan assistance received and the amount of assistance required through institutional financial aid resources.

For most of the 1990s, there has been a shift from providing assistance in the form of grants, to providing it in the form of loans. In 1993/94, the government altered the design of the OSAP program so that students would receive loans first, and loan forgiveness for amounts borrowed in excess of $6,000 per typical academic year before they could receive grants. In 1997/98, this amount was increased by $1,000 per year, which means that students are graduating with even higher debt loads. In recent years, governments have increased the amount of non-repayable assistance, but this comes as student loan debt levels are at a record high.

There is some evidence from Statistics Canada that access to postsecondary education has decreased across Canada from 1986 to 1994 by students from poorer socio-economic backgrounds. Since 1986, overall participation rates continue to climb. Tracking the access of economically disadvantaged students needs to be monitored.

Rising Eligibility Thresholds

At the same time as government has reduced the total dollars available to students, it has become more difficult for students to qualify for aid. The eligibility thresholds for needs assessment for Ontario Student Loans Program have been raised, in part because of greater expected parental contributions. While new criteria and programs such as the Canadian Millennium Scholarship and the Aiming for the Top Program have been introduced, they have not been harmonized with existing assistance programs.

Increased Burden on Institutions

Increased complexity in the number, types, and criteria for student financial assistance has required postsecondary institutions to become more involved in sorting through the maze of programs and requirements. Eligibility criteria and thresholds vary by program, and new changes are being introduced with little notice or advance information to students or institutions. Students complain of long waiting periods and being forced to muddle through an administrative quagmire that varies by program or institution. Financial Aid Offices in colleges and universities have taken on greater responsibilities to counsel, process, approve and document student financial assistance.

Institutions are also taking on greater responsibility for student loan defaults including some provision of emergency funds and advice. These efforts and a stronger economy have met with some success: student loan default rates have declined from 23.5 per cent in 1997 to 15.7 per cent in 2000.

Improving Technology

Technology is helping to ease administrative burdens somewhat. More students are using Web sites and on-line methods to seek information and apply for student financial assistance. For example, the number of OSAP Web applications in 2000/01 increased by 21 percent, from 66,544 in 1999/00 to 80,822 in 2000/01.

But much more needs to be done to simplify and harmonize federal, provincial and institutional policies and processes to create seamless and integrated entry and exit portals.

The Voice of Students

As the recipients of financial assistance, services, and counselling, students have a first-hand understanding of what does and does not work in the financial assistance process.

> *"The Ontario system is getting more complicated and decentralized. Each institution is doing the administration differently. It is a complex maze that students find hard to figure out. We need to simplify the process."*
> – Student Roundtable participant

Both the Ontario Community College Student Parliamentary Association (OCCSPA) and the Ontario Undergraduate Students Alliance (OUSA) consider the issue of student financial assistance their number one priority. Their goal is to improve the system through better communication and counselling, and more consistent practices across funding bodies and institutions. These goals can be met by improving the on-line information and application process, by informing students about emergency funds available and use of tuition set-aside money, and by harmonizing eligibility requirements. Improvements and transparency in needs assessment and eligibility requirements would provide better access; for example, the Canada Millennium Bursary is inaccessible for first year students who must complete a year of postsecondary study to be eligible.

> *"Rules and regulations must be communicated in advance for institutions and students to plan and prepare for changes. In 2000/2001 students didn't have access to a lower estimated income appeal until late August, and many students were in a position of being unable to plan for their postsecondary education financing."*
> – (Student Administrative Council, University of Toronto)

Mixed Reviews for Application Process

Ontario students find the application process relatively easy to manage and they were somewhat satisfied with overall programs for scholarships and bursaries. However, they rated the quality of the OSAP program poorly. (See following table on Highlights of the Student Survey.)

On a scale of 0 to 100, students gave OSAP a rating of 70 in terms of the ease of the application process, 67 in terms of their ability to track the status of their application, but only 59 for their perception of the overall quality of the program. This can be attributed to the length of time it takes to notify students about their loan eligibility and the amount they will receive. The process of applying for OSAP, being notified of eligibility and how much the loan will be, involves both MTCU and the postsecondary institutions. One third of applicants wait more than eight weeks to hear about the amount of their OSAP loans. Students were satisfied with the application process at their institutions for bursaries and scholarships.

Highlights of the Student Survey

Rating of Application Process	Total Rating: 0 – 100		
	OSAP	Bursaries	Scholarships
Ease of application process	70	78	69
Ease to track status	67	NA	NA
Overall quality of program	59	70	64
Advice/Counselling Sought			
Percent of students seeking financial advice/counselling	21	31	22
Percent of students obtaining information needed	81	83	85
Student Ratings of OSAP	College	University	Overall
Ease of the application process	69	70	70
Ease of tracking the status	68	65	67
Overall quality of OSAP	62	56	59

Source: *Student Experiences and Priorities,* Erin Research Inc. in the Resource Document, a supporting document to this Report

The strongest predictor of overall quality in student ratings is the ease of tracking the status of the loan. Two other secondary factors are the time it took the financial institution to process loan documents, and the outcome of the process—students granted loans rate the process better than those who were not. Improvements in student satisfaction may be made by ensuring that students know how to track their loan status.

There is also considerable confusion about the terms of loan repayment. This is the result of several problems in combination. Students say they do not receive enough high quality information that is relevant to their situation; they do not receive timely information; and the lack of harmonization between federal and provincial aid programs adds another layer of complexity to an already-complex system (e.g., two loans to repay with different rates of interest and repayment periods). What students are looking for is clear and early counselling and information on student financial assistance that is customized to their particular circumstances—before they enter the postsecondary system, while they are in the system, and when they exit the system.

> *"Exit is the worst time, a time of crisis for some students. Some default because they don't have the right information. There is no one place to get the answers – like an exit portal. There should be automatic exit interviews by institutions and the government should emphasize the good features available to encourage repayment, such as the Ontario Student Opportunity Grants."*
> --Roundtable participant

Students need to understand what assistance is available to them and what their loan repayment options are. Moving more of the loan application approvals on-line, creating and promoting planning tools and an integrated Web portal for student aid would help students find and use information on their own, and would simplify the process for them, their families and the institutions involved.

Made-in-Ontario Best Practice Models

- Students at the Roundtables and in their submissions to the Task Force cited some institutions in Ontario with well-administered financial assistance programs. Fanshawe College, York University, Queen's University and University of Toronto are among the institutions students consider 'best in breed' because they have good planning systems and counselling in place, and offer students an assessment of potential aid. Some of these institutions even top up the amount of assistance required.
- For instance, the University of Toronto has adopted a "needs-blind" admissions policy, which guarantees the provision of adequate student financial aid for any qualified student to enter and complete a program of study. The University of Toronto Advanced Planning System (UTAPS) program assesses student need based on a known formula prior to the students' admission and provides aid automatically. This program has resulted in an increase in the number of students from low-income families enrolled at the university.

The Voice of Institutions

Postsecondary institutions are keenly aware of the financial assistance hurdles and burdens facing students. Institutions that participated in the Task Force's Roundtable sessions offered views about student financial assistance that were in keeping with the comments and suggestions offered by students:

> *"The current allowable costs and loan maximums do not reflect today's real costs."*
>
> *"Focus on grants, bursaries and scholarships. If you want to improve access and affordability for students, drop loans."*
>
> *"Harmonize federal and provincial loan programs."*
>
> *"Minimize student debt load"*
>
> *"OSAP needs assessment is outdated and inadequate for student needs – weekly maximums are too low."*
>
> *"Make student laptop computers an eligible expense for OSAP assistance. This would be a real boon to students and to institutions."*
>
> *"Create an electronic portal for information on student financial assistance that can be accessed when students apply to OUAC or OCAS."*
>
> —Roundtable participants

Institutions recognize that an increasing number of students are using the Web as a research tool and to apply for assistance. They see a need for lending agencies and governments to ramp-up their on-line offerings and enrich the level of detail, planning tools and integrate the information they provide, simplifying the complexity for student users. This would go a long way towards improving the on-line application process and the ongoing management of student financial assistance.

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Raising the Bar on Student Financial Aid

- **One-Stop Shopping for Students, ACAATO**—a joint venture to build an Internet and telephone hub between the university and college application centres and OSAP, with 24 hour/7 days a week single source of information for students, counsellors, and parents about postsecondary education in Ontario. Students could apply on-line to Ontario colleges and universities and apply for financial assistance.
- **Creating Greater Efficiencies in Student Financial Aid Administration, COU**—a proposal for working collaboratively with the government and students to improve services.
- **Program Review/Operational Audit of OSAP, Fanshawe College**—a proposal to address the complexity in policies, procedures and improve services to students.
- **Higher Quality Education, Access to Students, Affordability and Accountability, OCCSPA**—a proposal for changes to financial aid, student fees and information.

Future Directions

Earlier Planning, Counselling, Communication

Students and their families need to start thinking about, and saving for, postsecondary education well before the time to apply for postsecondary education arrives. A number of institutions flagged the need for earlier involvement in planning, financial counselling support and timely access to accurate information about costs and programs. This information should be available to students, their families and teachers/guidance counsellors in the elementary, secondary and postsecondary systems.

At the Roundtables on Francophone Issues, the importance of better linkages between secondary schools and postsecondary institutions was deemed essential to improve access by opening doors to the wide range of student aid for college and university programs and encouraging students who might not otherwise go on to consider the many choices of diploma or degree programs.

A number of US examples of early financial planning for postsecondary education and professional guidance were also noted. Because of the traditionally high costs of postsecondary education in the US, Americans have developed a culture of early financial planning and use of registered education savings plans (like Canadian RESPs). There is also a higher degree of public promotion regarding the costs of higher education through high schools, postsecondary institutions, and government and lending agencies, including Web sites, awareness campaigns, alumni outreach, and reference publications.

The Task Force also heard from the Ontario Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, which is made up of students, parents, college and university aid administrators, and financial institutions. The Advisory Committee's primary goal is to facilitate access to postsecondary education for all qualified students. Its objectives overlap and reinforce those of the students and institutions. The Committee sees a need to simplify the system for students, parents, and administrators. It supports improved communication and information-sharing with students and their families. It also sees reducing the student debt load and the gap between OSAP loan and a student's assessed need as paramount.

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A number of US examples of early financial planning for postsecondary education and professional guidance were also noted. Because of the traditionally high costs of postsecondary education in the US, Americans have developed a culture of early financial planning and use of registered education savings plans (like Canadian RESPs). There is also a higher degree of public promotion regarding the costs of higher education through high schools, postsecondary institutions, and government and lending agencies, including Web sites, awareness campaigns, alumni outreach, and reference publications.

The Task Force also heard from the Ontario Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, which is made up of students, parents, college and university aid administrators, and financial institutions. The Advisory Committee's primary goal is to facilitate access to postsecondary education for all qualified students. Its objectives overlap and reinforce those of the students and institutions. The Committee sees a need to simplify the system for students, parents, and administrators. It supports improved communication and information-sharing with students and their families. It also sees reducing the student debt load and the gap between OSAP loan and a student's assessed need as paramount.

The Committee proposes increased use of "expert systems" comparable to what is in practice in other countries, such as diagnostic tools and tailoring interactive systems with scenario planning capability to aid student/family financial planning. Banks, governments, and educational representatives could work with students, alumni, and communicators to build an "Invest in Your Future" culture for students and their families, using multiple channels of communications. The joint use and promotion of existing sources of information like Campusfinder or Student.com could be linked with OSAP, OUAC, OCAS, or institutional Web sites. Noting that the burden of student loans is most acute as students prepare to leave school—either upon graduation or before completing their program—the Committee advocates the use of institutional exit interviews and the involvement of alumni associations to provide support networks for students who are struggling with unmet needs or their ability to repay loans.

> *"Instead of just asking alumni for funds, they could become part of the outreach to encourage students to plan for their future and also to provide support for students who may be at risk of dropping out due to financial hardships."*
> —Roundtable participant

New Directions for Student Financial Assistance

The Task Force recommendations are aligned with the provincial *Blueprint* commitment that "every willing and qualified Ontario student will continue to be able to attend college or university." The following recommendations to improve the student financial assistance process support the achievement of that goal.

The Task Force sees the need to track and monitor the participation rates of all Ontarians in postsecondary education. Institutions and governments need to assess on a regular basis the question of whether potential student debt load poses a deterrent to students and their families, especially those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

RECOMMENDATION: SIMPLIFY, COORDINATE AND HARMONIZE

7. **Simplify and coordinate student financial assistance policies, including needs assessment and eligibility criteria, by harmonizing the Canada Student Loans and the Ontario Student Loans Programs.**

RECOMMENDATION: LINK ONE-STOP ENTRY PORTAL WITH STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

8. **Evolve a partnership of college and university application centres and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to provide a single window of information for students, parents and counsellors about student financial assistance and postsecondary education in Ontario. Access through the single window would be done via multiple channels of communication such as on-line Internet access, print media, and telephone. There would be an interactive capacity for using planning and decision-making tools.**

RECOMMENDATION: TIMELY APPLICATIONS AND PAYMENTS

9. Continue to improve OSAP on-line application processing, tracking application status, sharing information with students and institutions, and speeding up the process through electronic transmittal of documentation. The Ministry, institutions and banks should partner to make application and fund transfer seamless and efficient for students.

RECOMMENDATION: ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

10. Develop an "Invest in Students" culture to make information, guidance and planning for postsecondary education accessible to students and families.

Initiate and provide incentives to create a public-private partnership for building an "Invest in Students" culture featuring early planning, expert counselling and financial aid decision-making tools, and information for students, families and counsellors. Involve partners from student, alumni, parent and guidance groups, education and financial institutions.

Encourage early financial planning for postsecondary education by students and families, beginning in elementary school. Build on the new curriculum requirements for an Annual Education Plan, involving and empowering students and their families.

RECOMMENDATION: MEASURE AND REPORT ON ACCESS

11. As part of their annual public report, postsecondary institutions should be required to report on accessibility and to track participation of their students, including those with socio-economic disadvantages.

The method of measuring access and tracking participation should be developed by the Council of Ontario Universities, the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and student organizations.

RECOMMENDATION: MORE ACCESSIBLE SCHOLARSHIP/AID ASSISTANCE

12. Improve scholarship assistance to make it more accessible to both college and university students:

The Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation should allow first year students to qualify for the national Canada Millennium Bursary.

The Ontario government should ensure that both college- and university-bound students have equal access to the Aiming for the Top Scholarships.

Review funding and OSAP policies related to access to computer technology and distance education such as the eligibility of student computer expenses.

RECOMMENDATION: POLICIES TO REDUCE STUDENT DEBT LOAD

13. **Continue strong focus on governmental and institutional policies to reduce student debt load and defaults. Encourage policies and practices to retain "at risk" qualified students to complete their postsecondary education.**

    Partner with lending institutions to create an easily accessed system-wide portal that assists students with understanding and managing their debt loads before they leave the institution.

    Conduct institutional exit interviews with students and provide students with information on all the avenues to support their financial obligations, including their debt.

    Improve students' access to trained counselling resources and the full use of financial assistance through tuition set-aside, emergency funds, the Ontario Student Opportunity Grant and other forms of loan forgiveness in order to help institutions support and retain students.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR E-LEARNING

24/7 SOLUTIONS

The next generation of learners will demand new types of education. Learning, like other services, will be accessible whenever people want it and wherever they choose to acquire it. Learning materials and experiences will be more widely available to all learners, and not just those attending institutions in person. There will be demands for more distributed learning that cuts across institutions and is delivered collaboratively by them. There is also a need for more access to information and communication technologies so that postsecondary students in smaller, northern and rural communities have a full range of learning opportunities available to them. Access to information and communication technologies must also be available for francophone students.

Perspectives gathered from the Task Force's research, Roundtable discussions, student survey, and proposals confirm the appetite for e-learning opportunities and the interest in creating a more innovative environment for education. While e-learning is viewed as an important delivery channel, there is a sense that there would always be a need for traditional classroom learning. The virtual classroom, Web-based administrative and student services, digital libraries and other new technologies are seen as providing benefits, not only to the learners, but to a wider community.

The Voice of Students

Students are seeking access to more on-line services and programs. Students see clear advantages in being able to learn, study and do assignments outside the classroom setting, at a time and place most convenient for them. This flexibility helps students who have part-time jobs or family commitments complete their studies at their own pace. At the same time, students see the need to ensure the appropriate support for using the new technologies.

> *"On-line processes work well, but students need face-to-face service as well. Not all services can be provided on-line, such as tutoring and help with academic writing."*
> --Student, Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario

Roundtable participants identified information technology as a major priority for improvement. Access to computers and electronic services was cited as a common source of frustration. Access was defined in terms of the affordability of new technologies for individual students, including the ability to purchase necessary hardware and software, the availability of computers within libraries or labs on campus, as well as the technology to enable the special needs learner. While most students welcomed the use of technology in their studies and in obtaining services, it should not be considered a substitute for face-to-face contact.

Open University, UK—Model for Student Service

The Open University (OU) in the UK emphasizes and delivers better service by offering:

- One tutor for every 25 students
- On-line interactive conference facility in support of courses
- Ability for students to organize and moderate some of their own on-line conferences
- 24/7 messaging service for students and faculty
- OpenLibr@ry
- Mix of media in course offerings—CD ROM, television, and print texts
- Student guidance Web site
- Ability to check record/transcripts on-line
- Information and qualifications requirements available on-line
- Course registration on-line
- Electronic mailings for information
- On-line booking for dates and venues for residential courses

Student surveys conducted by the OU indicate strong support for these services with the added benefit of administrative savings for the institution.

The Voice of Institutions

Institutions are more likely to engage in e-learning where there are economies of scale, and this is more likely to occur in collaborative ventures with other institutions and/or the private sector. These collaborations often involve sharing of courses, programs, materials, shared faculty and common infrastructure. With the new technologies, there is much "learning by doing" and the shared effort and knowledge allow all to continue to move forward.

> *"....provincially, we will need to develop some sort of infrastructure, because we do not know who is developing what on-line. It is too expensive to develop five different psych courses when each course development could cost an institution $25,000 to $75,000 to $100,000."*
> -- Roundtable participant

Due to the fact that up-front investments in enabling technologies are very high, individual institutions cannot fully capitalize on e-learning opportunities on their own. New students and new faculty have an experience and ease with new technologies. They have expectations that services will be there and up and running. Although demand for e-services and e-learning is growing, there have not been significant investments in accelerating the implementation of the new technologies.

> *"Any progress has been staffed and funded at the margin, where the cost for development comes at the expense of another program."*
> --Roundtable participant

> *"For the new generation of faculty, the Web is part of their tool kit and they expect to use it and have it available to them. This has put demands on the investment we need to make in server capacity."*
> --University administrator

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Most are convinced that e-processing and other e-services will not reduce or even avoid costs. The only way to justify the high costs of developing and implementing courses, programs and services is by working collaboratively to share expertise and resources. During Roundtable discussions, one group suggested that even though few colleges or universities could use identical systems because of their unique structure, there is an opportunity to achieve synergies through the sharing of human resources in system development and training programs. Others suggested that there were opportunities for shared procurement on a regional basis involving other public educational institutions.

Raising the Bar on Distributed Learning

The Task Force received a number of proposals that looked beyond e-learning courses and considered the whole environment supporting the student and the virtual classroom.

- **Course via the Internet and Andragogical Support, La Cité Collégiale**—a proposal to improve the Internet resources for adult students through new technologies and technical support.
- **E-Learning—Education Innovation for Ontario, Laurentian University**—a proposal to expand the use of wireless technologies, cooperatively develop curriculum for health professionals, create a northern centre for research and training in on-line learning and facilitate the sharing of programs and courses.
- **Expanding Collaborative Programming, St. Lawrence College**—a proposal for the expansion of the regional video-conferencing network. This project would be a demonstration of shared programming and administrative collaboration.
- **Learning Technology Systems Architecture, Collège Boréal, Seneca College & TFO/TVO**—a proposal to develop a common approach to e-learning, using the full range of technologically based learning strategies.
- **Networked Educational Info-structure, University of Toronto**—a proposal from the Medical Department that would allow health professionals and hospitals, as well as students and faculty in health related disciplines, to use technology for both access to information and just-in-time learning.
- **Ontario E-learning/E-business College Consortium, Durham College, Centennial College, George Brown College**—a proposal to initiate a student and faculty Web-based educational e-learning and e-business environment.
- **Ontario French Language E-learning Portal, Collège Boréal, Collège des Grands Lacs and Contact Nord**—a proposal to develop and manage all material and software, as well as related administrative services on-line.
- **Opportunities in E-learning, Sheridan College**—a study to identify distance learning opportunities in technology-related centres of excellence throughout the postsecondary sector.

Both COU and ACAATO have played a leadership role in the sector by providing a forum and focus on e-learning issues. COU's proposal to the Task Force, "Student Access to e-learning Resources: Implementing COU's Time to Sow Proposal,"[6] emphasized the importance of system-wide technology planning to provide efficiencies in acquisitions and ensure quality content. COU's implementation group identified the major challenges to having effective Web-based services for students:

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- Lack of consistent technology standards among universities and colleges, in terms of applications and media used
- Disparate distance learning pilots, currently underway, that lack coordination
- On-campus and off-campus access currently available through relatively low-speed connections and congested networks
- Insufficient multimedia content available for distance education applications
- Faculty members' skills limited to content development only

These findings suggest that new learning technologies must be guided by careful course design, responsive faculty and student support. They also note the importance of well-designed pilot projects and careful monitoring of results.

ACAATO is developing a business case for the establishment of an Ontario CAATs Distributed Learning Network (DLN)[7] that would create a system-wide picture of current distributed learning activity in the college sector. Expected in March 2001, the business case will determine the preferred model for innovation and collaboration, identify potential partners, and outline the resources required to establish and sustain the DLN.

Lessons from Other Places—Models for Distributed Learning

- **The Canadian Virtual University/l'Université Virtuelle Canadienne** (CVU/UVC), announced on September 28, 2000, is a consortium of seven Canadian universities from four provinces, providing complete programs on-line, through traditional distance education and classroom learning. Laurentian University is the only representative from Ontario. CVU/UVC will not have its own courses or degrees but will act as a portal to other Web sites. Students will register with one of the seven universities and then mix and match from 1,500 courses as they work toward a degree from the "home" institution.
- **The University of Phoenix**, a private, for-profit higher education institution, with 52 campuses and 92 learning centres in 35 states, Puerto Rico and Vancouver, serves 80,000 working adult students, 13,700 of them studying on-line.
- **The Connected Campus**, where eleven colleges in the US formed a consortium under the Robinson Group, which have developed a local area network accessible to students, faculty and staff and supports the full range of the colleges' information-based functions, both administrative and academic. Rather than attempt to provide the best of all courses and programs, each college concentrates on the areas in which it can demonstrate excellence. Students are able to take courses from any of the colleges, even those offered worldwide.
- **The Open University** is Britain's largest single teaching institution, with more than 200,000 students enrolled, 110,000 of them interactively on-line. Courses are designed for students studying either at home or in their workplaces, and are open to students from the UK, continental Europe and several other countries. Courses use specially produced textbooks, TV and radio programs, audio and video tapes, computer software and home experiment kits. The programs also use locally based tutors working within a network of 305 regional study centres in the UK, 42 abroad, plus annual residential schools.

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[7] The business case is being funded by the Ontario Knowledge Network for Learning.

Future Directions

There has been significant investment in distance education and e-learning in the postsecondary sector in Ontario. E-learning extends the reach of education to a wider group of learners by offering a flexibility for the part-time learner, a level playing field for the person with disabilities, and a "local" campus for the remote or distant learner. It extends the reach of the learner, providing more choice and access to courses offered by the best institutions in the world. It extends the reach of the instructor in that they have new and more ways for interacting with students. It extends the reach of every citizen by enabling more adult learners to enter and exit the education system easily, thus putting lifelong learning within their grasp.

E-learning also poses some challenges. As much as it can promote accessibility, the availability and affordability of technology can create a barrier to quality education for some. By breaking down boundaries typically used to define the catchment area for institutions, it pushes each institution to concentrate on its area of excellence. Due to the fact that students have more mobility in the education sector than ever before, the need to recognize credits fairly and to enable transfer becomes more pressing than ever. With every adult now a potential student, traditional methods for developing and delivering courses will no longer suffice. Students have praise for library resources currently and welcome improvements; the investments necessary for electronic and digital resources will require collaboration and partnership. The students can be from anywhere in the world, not just within the province, but across the country and even the globe.

There are obvious reasons for collaboration in e-learning. Economies of scale can be realized when institutions work together. Duplication can be limited or eliminated when institutions combine their knowledge and resources. Cooperation on the development of general and basic course material is more efficient and allows each institution to focus on their areas of excellence. Lastly, when specialized expertise can be shared, it can be spread over those areas where it is sometimes in short supply.

As institutions and the government consider investments in e-learning technology, course development, learner and teacher supports, it is important to acknowledge the relationship between those investments and the need for a solid foundation of information, process and technology are in place. When considering a strategic investment in e-learning technology and infrastructure, the requirements and supports for the entry and nexus portals also need to be considered. Students should be able to access information, apply and search course inquiries on-line. Once in a program, students need to be able to access research material, handle their accounts and obtain transcripts through digital and electronic means. Once students complete courses, diplomas or degrees, there needs to be a clear and fair process for credit recognition and transfer.

Most educators in Ontario regard collaboration in e-learning as a strategic opportunity. There are clear opportunities for collaboration in infrastructure, curriculum, and the supports for the learner and teacher.

Technology Infrastructure

Significant investments must be made in the technology corridor, whether it be telephone technology, fibre optics, or wireless satellite technology. To support technology-based learning, existing facilities will require renovation and new investment. The provincial government will need to play a leadership role in bringing together other levels of government and private partners to work with the educational community to put the 'pipes and wires' in place.

Curriculum

There are opportunities for collaboration in the development of courses, particularly courses on new technologies, and in sharing information. The provincial government can enable the collaboration in the development of curriculum and facilitate the shared learning of how to do it well. Institutions and government can jointly develop the framework and mechanisms for credit recognition and transfer.

Support to the Learner and Teacher

Students and faculty must have the necessary support for learning and teaching in an e-learning environment. COU and ACAATO can work with institutions to provide that support and enable the best use of new technologies. The provincial government can provide assistance to students in the costs of purchasing the necessary technology.

As all the stakeholders attempt to come to grips with the need for strategic and system-wide solutions, the needs of the student should not be lost in the allure of the technology. Applied learning, teaching and research are what postsecondary education is about. The use of technology is a means to an end. Institutions, whether they are defined by "clicks" or "bricks," will establish their mission in terms of what they do for students, the community and the economy, not by what technology they use.

RECOMMENDATION: STRATEGIC INVESTMENT IN E-LEARNING

14. **The government should support strategic investments in the major infrastructure requirements for e-learning/distributed learning.**
15. **The government should support and promote collaboration in the development and delivery of e-learning.**

Mandates and Missions

...STILL EVOLVING

In recent years, Ontario's postsecondary education sector has evolved to meet changing priorities—regional and national, domestic and global, social and economic.

Our institutions face the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. These include increased global competition for talent and investment, higher expectations of students as educational consumers, and the transformational pace of technology and e-learning to change how and where students learn. There is a clear sense that the pace of change has accelerated and that the ability to adapt, evolve, and be nimble is vital for future success.

Governments and institutions are asking questions such as:

> *"Are the missions pursued in the last century appropriate for the next?"*
>
> *"What should the legislative mandates and funding relationships be between institutions and governments, and how can these benefit the public interest?"*
>
> *"Do the size and structure of the postsecondary sector make sense for the future?"*

The Shifting Focus of Colleges and Universities

Flexibility and adaptability to community needs is a hallmark of college success in Ontario. The 25 Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology are relatively young institutions. They were originally established in Ontario in 1966 to meet the learning needs of those looking for employment-related programs and services. Francophone colleges were created less than a decade ago and are still building on the continuum of the French language elementary and secondary system to provide greater access to these students. Today, most colleges provide diplomas, certificates, a wide range of remedial access, postsecondary and, with the recent addition of applied research and applied degrees, advanced training programs. The student base now includes more lifelong learners and older students seeking "just-in-time" labour market skills, technology upgrading, and workplace-relevant knowledge. Colleges now go beyond their local communities to serve broader regional, provincial, national and international education and training needs. Many colleges attract both Canadian and international students with university degrees into their applied learning programs.

Most Ontario universities are much older than the colleges, and their roots are very different. They began as institutions of higher learning that focused on teaching and research. Today, Ontario universities fall into two categories: those that serve primarily undergraduate and some graduate students and those where the emphasis is on research, medical and graduate students. Universities compete in a national and international market for excellence in research, scholarship and faculty. Through partnerships with both the public and private sectors, and through recent strategic investments, universities have expanded their role as knowledge centres and innovation incubators.

The Council of Senior Administrative Officers for COU describes Ontario universities in 2001 in its report and letter to the Task Force:

- *We are at a critical juncture faced with the largest increase in enrolment demand in more than thirty years ... with rising expectations for services ... with the demand that universities must be part of the economic driver for regional, provincial and national economic development.*
- *A vital higher education and research environment is crucial to the attractiveness of jurisdictions to investors and talented people ... Ontario universities are engaged in an ever more intensive competition with those elsewhere.*

In its communication to the Task Force, the United Steelworkers, Local 1998 sets out its perspective on the roles and value of universities.

- *Ontario's university system is highly diverse. It ranges from institutions with a regional focus, within Ontario, to institutions that stand among the leading institutions of higher learning in the world. That diversity is of value to the communities in which they are located, to the people they employ, to the students they serve, and to the province as a whole.*

Concerns were expressed to the Task Force about whether universities can be as nimble and responsive to change, given their more traditional framework for decision-making and their flexibility to adapt and meet their human resource requirements in the future.

Tracking the Trends

Economic Clusters Forming

The 1999 Ontario Jobs and Investment Board report noted that the province should aspire to be a North American leader in advanced education and training. "Anchor" institutions such as a university, college, or research institute are vital for the success of economic clusters. In Ontario, business, municipal and healthcare institutions are forging closer linkages with colleges and universities to meet critical demands for a highly trained and specialized workforce.

The development of distinctive regional knowledge clusters has recognized university and college contributions to research, learning and skill building.

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Regional Knowledge Clusters

- The Kitchener-Waterloo "technology triangle" supported by Conestoga College, the University of Waterloo, and Wilfrid Laurier University.
- The Ottawa/Kanata knowledge cluster with Algonquin College, La Cité Collégiale, Carleton and Ottawa Universities.
- Nipissing University, Canadore College and the North Bay Hospital as well as Sault College, Algoma University College, Lake Superior University and the Sault Hospitals are forging new partnerships in response to the demand for healthcare expertise and skills.
- Sheridan College's centre of excellence for communications, animation, emerging technologies, and design includes an incubator partnership for business development with the Town of Oakville, partnerships with national and international media/technology companies and linkages with the University of Toronto and York University.

Many institutions have been able to develop specialized programming to serve their students better and distinguish themselves from other institutions. Centres of excellence are multiplying; examples range from the Brock University's Viticulture Program, the University of Western Ontario's Ivey School of Business to Sheridan's Centre for Animation and Emerging Technologies. This trend to specialization by Ontario's institutions is occurring across the sector and across North America.

Collaboration and Differentiation

A number of organizations are working in combination to create distinctive regional economic centres of excellence. These local centres of excellence have significant community benefits as submissions to the Task Force demonstrate.

Raising the Bar on Community Economic Impact

- **The Centre for Business and Industry**—To meet the need for a highly qualified bilingual workforce in the North Bay area, Boréal and Canadore Colleges are bringing their expertise and infrastructure together to provide contract training in entrepreneurship, business and industrial sectors. Also part of this partnership are the Canadian Ecology Centre and TVO/TFO for eco-tourism.
- **Partnerships for Student Benefit**—Niagara Regional Police Service and Niagara College are establishing a centre of excellence for justice and policing, and are looking at the possibility of joint applied degrees with Brock University. Niagara College, Niagara University (US), and the Niagara hospitality industry have combined their resources to provide recognized career ladders in business, hospitality, tourism and social services, with diploma and degree recognition and employment placements.
- **Project for the Integration of Youth Training in Trades at the Industrial Technical Centre**—La Cité Collégiale in Ottawa is partnering with three French school boards and private firms to help meet skill shortages through specialized pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs.

Differentiation and specialization are increasing despite a funding formula that is enrolment based and does not reward excellence and quality of performance. One size does not fit all in the evolving educational environment. Individual learner-centred environments are becoming the norm, jobs and career choices are multiplying, and provincial and national borders are evaporating for talented students pursuing both learning opportunities and value for their educational

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- **Partnerships for Student Benefit**—Niagara Regional Police Service and Niagara College are establishing a centre of excellence for justice and policing, and are looking at the possibility of joint applied degrees with Brock University. Niagara College, Niagara University (US), and the Niagara hospitality industry have combined their resources to provide recognized career ladders in business, hospitality, tourism and social services, with diploma and degree recognition and employment placements.
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Differentiation and specialization are increasing despite a funding formula that is enrolment based and does not reward excellence and quality of performance. One size does not fit all in the evolving educational environment. Individual learner-centred environments are becoming the norm, jobs and career choices are multiplying, and provincial and national borders are evaporating for talented students pursuing both learning opportunities and value for their educational investment. Competition will increase between institutions locally and globally in attracting students, faculty and resources. Collaboration between colleges and between universities and colleges is not encouraged by their different funding regimes, particularly the college formula, which rewards greater market share, not specialization.

Collaboration among Ontario's universities and colleges should be encouraged, but not mandated. According to Ian Clark, President of the Council of Ontario Universities, the key principles for successful management of any institution today are specialization/differentiation and partnership/collaboration/strategic alliance. *"Successful enterprises are characterized by a commitment to both of these principles, and a capacity to strike an appropriate balance between them."*

In 1996, the Smith Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education endorsed the "different but complementary roles" of colleges and universities. The postsecondary system in Ontario has historically drawn a distinction between the colleges and universities. These distinctions exist today, but there is more student traffic between universities and colleges. COU has expressed concern about mandated collaboration between these institutions, as it might lead to standardization rather than specialization. However, the Task Force sees the drive for excellence and differentiated missions as a continuing strength of the Ontario postsecondary system. In our view, "excellence seeks excellence." As the examples cited above show, successful collaborations build on the strengths and the reputation of each partner, and bring enormous benefits to all: the community—local or regional, university, college, hospital, municipal or business enterprise.

Applied Degrees—an International Credential

Recognizing that higher levels of applied skills and knowledge should result in some form of applied or other degrees, a number of colleges are proposing to develop polytechnic institutes or university colleges. Degrees have become the international currency for mobile knowledge workers and give graduates both national and international recognition for higher education.

The Ontario government's *Postsecondary Excellence and Choice Act* (passed in December 2000) allows applied degrees to be granted by colleges that meet the standards established by a new Quality Assessment Board. The Act also allows private, for-profit universities to grant degrees in Ontario. This will enhance the competitiveness of existing institutions, while providing students with a more diverse set of educational choices.

A New Breed of Polytechnics

There has not been a polytechnic in Ontario since Ryerson's evolution from a polytechnic to a university in the early 1990s. Polytechnics combine existing knowledge and theory with applied research and advanced skills for practical solutions, including adapting technology for manufacturing and healthcare. These advanced skills usually warrant advanced recognition such as applied degrees. While the new legislation allows applied degrees to be piloted by some colleges, (eight per year for the next three years), this may not meet either students' desire

for an internationally recognized credential, or employers' needs for higher level technology skills and expertise.

Raising the Bar on Missions

The Task Force received a number of proposals that reflect this effort to extend the spectrum and range of missions for Ontario postsecondary institutions:

- **Humber College is proposing a Polytechnic Institute for the Greater Toronto Area in advanced technology for the automotive, aerospace, tool and equipment manufacturing sectors.**
- **Cambrian College is proposing to meet regional industry requirements for highly skilled technology workers and specialized health science skills with applied degrees in its Regional Polytechnic Institute of Northeastern Ontario**
- **A Business Plan for an Ontario University at Durham College proposes a continuum of seamless learning opportunities to meet the diverse needs of students and employers.**
- **Georgian College is looking for university partnership(s) to establish a University-College Centre.**
- **Under the Lambton College University Transfer Program, the college would offer the first two years of university programs leading to BA/BSc from participating universities.**

ACAATO's discussion paper "*Alternative Relationship Models Between the Government and the Colleges*" anticipates the creation of some polytechnics in Ontario and suggests that, in the future, the differentiation of the colleges will become even more pronounced: "*This means ... [some of] the goals and objectives ... could apply to only a few institutions, rather than the whole system.*"

The performance of Ontario's postsecondary institutions and the evolution of centres of excellence have raised the standards for higher education in Canada. The Task Force does not regard the university-college institutional model as the best fit for Ontario, given our size and degree of specialized needs. However, polytechnic institutes may well emerge as another form of specialized expertise with applied research, applied degrees and, perhaps some day, associate degrees. A recognized college with centres of excellence may prove to be the foundation for a viable polytechnic in the future. Clearly, one size does not fit all. Differentiated missions and the development of specialized talents add to the range of postsecondary choices for students and strengthen social and economic prospects for Ontario.

Knowledge Clusters in the North

Northern postsecondary education institutions see themselves at the "core" of new knowledge clusters in Northern Ontario. With their networks, expert knowledge, human resources and research capabilities, these institutions are well-positioned to become the catalysts for economic transformation.

A recent report on Ontario's North [8] documents several disquieting trends. One is the slower population growth and the out-migration of youth and young adults from the North: 0.47 percent growth compared to 6.6 percent growth in Ontario from 1991-1996. The educational deficit in Northern Ontario is also reducing for an internationally recognized credential, or employers' needs for higher level technology skills and expertise.

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[8] *Together for the North 2000-2010: Economic Transformation of Northern Ontario*

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A recent report on Ontario's North [8] documents several disquieting trends. One is the slower population growth and the out-migration of youth and young adults from the North: 0.47 percent growth compared to 6.6 percent growth in Ontario from 1991-1996. The educational deficit in Northern Ontario is also reducing employment opportunities: 42 percent of the population has no degree, certificate or diploma compared with 33 percent in Ontario overall. The overall employment rate in the North is 54 percent, one of the lowest in the province, which limits access to local labour market for students.

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[8] *Together for the North 2000-2010: Economic Transformation of Northern Ontario*

Northern institutions anticipate the emergence of a new knowledge-intensive sector that includes the education sector, business service industries, some healthcare services and those sub-sectors supplying the resource and tourism industries. These institutions have set an ambitious goal of increasing their current enrolment by 30 percent, or 8,000 students, by 2010.

Northern institutions have been using regional social and economic development report cards to measure and account for their effectiveness. These report cards came to the Task Force as proposals and as best practice examples.

Economic Impact Reports

- **Sault College:** Annual Economic Statement to the Community
  - 80 percent of 1999 graduates working within six months of graduation
  - 16,000 postsecondary graduates training for new business (call centre, casino) and traditional industry (Algoma Steel)
  - International partnerships with Finland Polytechnic, Liaoning Financial College
  - Annual spending by college students in the region—$20,700,000
  - Student contribution to community employment—920 jobs (2.5 students = 1 FT job).
  - Sault College is the seventh largest employer with annual purchases of $9 million in goods and services
  - Total estimated impact of $88,500,000 per year
- **Canadore, Confederation and Northern Colleges** propose a joint pilot report card on regional economic development
- The ***Together for the North 2000-2010*** report also showed that total annual expenditures by the three universities, six CAATs, two university colleges and their students was $385 million, with an estimated employment effect on the Northern Ontario economy of 12,000 jobs, sustained on an annual basis.

Postsecondary institutions in Northern Ontario emphasized the need for access and remediation programs for students, including those from aboriginal and francophone communities. These access programs fill essential gaps in basic language and math skills. Although remediation costs are substantial and increasing—one in six faculty required in one institution—they are essential for student success. Pre-testing, assessment and tracking students with a common student identifier are important tools for helping students develop their skills and customize the right mix of programs. Student financial aid is seen as inadequate to meet actual student expenses for studying in the North. Emergency funds are often required and there is not enough notice for payment of OSAP loans.

Inter-institutional cooperation is occurring on many fronts in the North and is expected to increase in line with the commitment made by institution presidents in *Together for the North.*

Raising the Bar on Northern Collaboration

- A Strategic Alliance for Collaborative Partnerships—between Canadore and Georgian colleges proposes better access for students to academic programs through shared services. This could be a model for others.
- Cooperative development of courses delivered through distance education or e-learning is on the rise. Contact North reports an 11 percent growth in programs offered electronically over last year.
- Shared infrastructure is being explored with other community partners including schools, hospitals and other public organizations. Community learning centres, or "electronic cottages" could be equipped for technology-assisted learning with multiple users and funding sources, Laurentian University and Contact North.

Barriers to these forms of cooperation were identified as the "silos" of different policy and funding mechanisms. For example, instead of renovating available space in one college campus, a brand new school was built for secondary school students at three times the cost. There is also a lack of alignment in funding formula to encourage college-university collaboration. There is no incentive for jointly soliciting capital funds or articulation agreements for credit recognition or co-ventures between secondary schools and postsecondary.

With continued de-population in the North, the ability of these institutions to function at a continued level of excellence is at risk. If young people leave the North to attain postsecondary education, they are not likely to return there to work. The northern institutions need to accelerate their collaboration plans in order to counter this trend and to attract and retain students who are future working members and business contributors to their communities.

Accommodating Francophone Communities

Ontario's francophone population makes up almost six percent of the total population. In Ontario, francophone institutions have a vital three-fold mandate: to provide access to higher education for francophones in the other official language; to address the educational deficit of the francophone population relative to the Ontario population; and to encourage full participation in the community and the pursuit of economic opportunities.

Ontario has the largest francophone population in Canada outside Quebec, with more than twice the francophone population of New Brunswick. The French school boards in Ontario have been developing specific programs and curricula tailored to the needs of francophone students. With the development of three francophone colleges during the last decade, these students can now explore a fuller continuum of higher education opportunities.

The three francophone colleges—Collège Boréal in Sudbury, La Cité Collégiale in Ottawa and Collège des Grand Lacs in Toronto—have a combined enrolment of 5,374, representing 3.2 percent of the total college system in 1999. The University of Ottawa, Laurentian University and Glendon College at York University are bilingual institutions offering programs in both official languages.

Francophone students, like other students in postsecondary institutions, are interested in one-stop information and application services. They also see a need for timely, well-informed guidance and counselling about career choices and related programs. And they want to ensure that financial aid is available to them.

The Task Force held extensive discussions in Roundtables on francophone issues and in meetings with representatives of colleges, universities, youth federation, parent and community associations. The barriers for francophone students are similar to those encountered by students throughout the system: they saw the need to improve college/university cooperation and ease the transfer of students between institutions. Given the high proportion of Franco-Ontarians who complete their education with Grade 12, secondary school students need informed mentors and guidance counsellors to help them understand their educational and career choices. Better informed students would more likely complete their studies. Remediation programs required in basic communications and math add to the cost for students and institutions. Internet access outside of class time is still limited for students searching for information.

A number of proposals offered by francophone stakeholders emphasize the cost benefits of cutting down duplication and sharing of programs or systems. The small and widely dispersed population base of Franco-Ontarians makes this inter-institutional cooperation essential.

Made-in-Ontario best practices include:

- A strategic alliance between **Collège Boréal and Collège d'Alfred de l'Université de Guelph** provides a collaborative program for veterinary practices in three and a half years.
- **Collège des Grands Lacs** purchases services for payroll and human resources from Collège Boréal, decreasing the cost of acquiring the systems.
- **Hearst College** shares cafeteria, gymnasium and library facilities with **Collège Boréal** in Hearst.

Raising the Bar on Collaboration

- **Collège Boréal, TVO/TFO and Seneca College** proposed pooling resources and expertise for learning technology systems and learning strategies.
- **Collège Boréal, Collège des Grands Lacs, and Contact North** propose a common portal for application, registration, administration and prior learning assessment on-line.

Supporting Aboriginal Communities

Ontario's aboriginal population makes up almost 1.3 percent of the total population (1996 census). Aboriginal peoples see education as a vital part of their growth and development, however, aboriginal youth across Canada do not yet have the same benefits of postsecondary educational opportunity as other Canadians.

Twenty eight percent of non-aboriginal Canadians between the ages of 20 and 29 have received a college/trade certification, compared to 20 percent of aboriginal Canadians. Similarly, only four percent of aboriginal Canadians aged 20 to 29 have received a university degree, compared to 19 percent of non-aboriginal Canadians.

Aboriginal communities are seeking more educational opportunities, both in the mainstream postsecondary education system and in their own education and

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Aboriginal communities are seeking more educational opportunities, both in the mainstream postsecondary education system and in their own education and training institutions. Ontario colleges and universities have developed programs and services to respond to the needs of aboriginal students, in some cases supported by specific provincial funding. Brock, Lakehead, and Nipissing Universities have aboriginal teacher education programs. In addition, some Ontario postsecondary institutions such as Lakehead University, Confederation College, and Sir Sandford Fleming College, already have a significant proportion of aboriginal students enrolled.

Aboriginal communities have also developed their own free-standing aboriginal institutes, which offer literacy/skills upgrading, secondary school programs, training programs, and postsecondary education programs. These institutions are required to partner with public colleges or universities in order to offer their students a degree or diploma.

The Aboriginal Institutes' Consortium (AIC) represents nine Ontario institutes and serves more than 400 students per year. Enrolments at these institutes have increased by 92 percent over the past five years, in part the result of the aboriginal demographic outpacing average growth in the Ontario population.

The Consortium provides several unique community-based programs to accommodate aboriginal learning styles and offer culturally enriched environments. These specialized programs, together with aboriginal instructors and strong student support services, result in higher rates of student retention and success for aboriginal students than what they experience in the mainstream system.

Several of these programs were highlighted by the Consortium in its submission to the Task Force:

- Anishinabek Educational Institute delivers Native Early Childhood Education part-time through a combination of classroom and distance delivery. Current locations are North Bay, Thunder Bay and Munsey-Deleware. The delivery of this program allows students (some employed) to earn their credentials while remaining in or close to their home communities.
- Six Nations Polytechnic entered into an agreement with five universities for the delivery of the Native University Access Program (first year university) at Six Nations. Upon completion of the program, Polytechnic students receive automatic admission to one of the five universities if they attain an agreed-upon grade average. This has been an excellent program to assist students who may not have been university-bound, in gaining the competence and confidence to pursue postsecondary education. The agreement with the five universities provides students with choices for continuing their studies and the recognition of credits by each of the universities.
- Seven Generations and Six Nations Polytechnic developed and deliver annual training to principals of First Nations schools. The development and delivery costs and the administrative responsibilities are shared between the two institutes. Program delivery alternates each year between locations in the north and south. The program is recognized throughout First Nations and non-First Nations communities as essential training for principals and administrators in schools attended by aboriginal students. This particular program is not offered in the mainstream system.

The AIC serves an important role in community-based postsecondary education and training for aboriginal students. The Task Force appreciates the need for specialized programs in a centre of excellence model to serve the growing aboriginal youth population, as well as the mature student. The sense of community fostered by these separate institutes plays a significant role for aboriginal people in Ontario. However, there is also great benefit to further cooperative arrangements on a longer term basis with universities, colleges, employers and governments.

Future Directions

Postsecondary institutions need to develop long-range collaborative plans to meet their broad objectives of providing a full range of quality programs and services and ensuring access for Ontarians, including those serving francophone, rural and northern communities. Complementary programs, common administrative support systems and strategic investments in technology and e-learning will benefit these institutions and especially, their students. The postsecondary sector must be guided by a broad vision and strategy to bring together the leadership, the partnerships and the resources to enable the sector to meet diverse needs while maintaining high standards.

The development of this vision should create a framework that recognizes that the public expects universities, colleges, and government to cooperate for the benefit of students, the economy and the communities. This process should be initiated by the government with full participation by the postsecondary sector, and with student, business and community involvement. It should be focused and fast, recognizing the cooperative foundation already demonstrated through responses to this Task Force, the pace of global change and the looming deadline of 2003.

The Task Force recognizes that the universities are older, more established institutions, operating within a legislative framework different than colleges: they are non-profit corporations, each with its own individual charter. This has allowed universities to evolve their own missions and to differentiate their programs, research and teaching specialities. Colleges are 35 years old and are regulated as crown agencies of the government. They need legislative change that provides the ability to evolve their missions, matching regional economic and social requirements (see A New College Charter chapter).

The Task Force has considered the experience of other sectors in mergers and restructuring. The drivers have frequently been the need to cut or contain costs and to create viable entities through economies of scale. In considering the future potential for economies of scale, the literature on the savings from mergers does not show significant savings from amalgamating institutions the size of most Ontario colleges or universities, particularly when there have been considerable financial constraints over several years prior.[9] Similarly, substantive size related economies are likely to occur at the low end of the enrolment range usually defined as 500 students.[10] Few Ontario institutions fall below this threshold. Grands Lacs in

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[9] Wallace Steven. *In Search of Vision and Values: The Minnesota Higher Education Merger: New Directions for Community Colleges* No. 102, summer 1998.

[10] Brinkman Paul T, and Leslie, Larry L. *Economies of Scale in Higher Education: 60 Years of Research, The Review of Higher Education*, Vol 10 No. 1 fall 1986.

Toronto is one of these institutions and was created in the last five years to serve francophone students.

Given the future demand for much greater capacity, the significant costs already cut in the postsecondary sector, and the research from other jurisdictions on mergers, the Task Force sees little benefit to forced mergers. There are many reasons for the slow growth of Grands Lacs, including the initial lack of transfer of existing programs from bilingual institutions, as was the case for the other two francophone colleges. Its future viability requires significant cooperation with the francophone secondary schools, the other francophone and bilingual institutions, and the collaborative opportunities, to expand its reach through French language e-learning (see collaborative proposals with Collège Boréal, Collège des Grands Lacs, and Contact Nord, page 44).

The Task Force concludes that there must be a balance between financial viability and the capacity to develop and deliver quality programs and student services. Each case should be assessed based on the individual merits, the results expected, and the desired benefits to students and community. A one-solution, cookie-cutter approach does not serve the diverse needs and aspirations of Ontarians.

Much more benefit, including cost savings, is anticipated through collaborative efforts in the postsecondary sector, as referenced in the proposals received and the study by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

RECOMMENDATION: EXPAND THE VISION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

16. The government should recognize the differentiated missions for postsecondary institutions in contributing to the greater participation of regions and special populations in economic, social and community development.

This vision must offer concrete plans, not general strategies, and focus on planning, outcomes and measurable results.

RECOMMENDATION: ENABLE DIFFERENTIATION

17. Consider the polytechnic model and potential "host" institutions to expand postsecondary education choices in Ontario and establish this model within the new college charter framework.

18. Eliminate the government defined geographic catchment areas for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. Colleges should be given the flexibility and latitude to strike collaborative arrangements anywhere in the province, in the country, or in the world.

The colleges' current limited geographic catchment areas do not match the movements of today's highly mobile student, nor do these outdated borders recognize the colleges' broader regional economic development role as specialized centres of excellence with national and international demand.

RECOMMENDATION: ENCOURAGE COMPLEMENTARY MISSIONS THROUGH COLLABORATION

19. Align incentives for postsecondary education with efforts on the part of institutions to adopt collaborative arrangements in recognition that collaboration is even more vital and urgent for francophone, rural and northern institutions.

This will likely mean funding recognition of the different mandates of northern, francophone, and rural postsecondary institutions in a manner that is different from current means, to serve their communities.

Encourage northern postsecondary education institutions and their community partners to build on their "*Together for the North 2000-2010*" plan by maximizing the use of existing resources and infrastructure, attracting and retaining students, and developing complementary programs to eliminate or minimize unnecessary duplication.

Appoint a special advisor for francophone and northern collaboration, empowered to facilitate collaborative arrangements and make recommendations on changes in funding or other arrangements to ensure viable northern, francophone and rural institutions.

RECOMMENDATION: ENSURE ACCESS

20. Provide targeted funding to permit special populations—aboriginal and francophones, for instance, to have full access to educational opportunities.

Both federal and provincial governments should recognize the higher cost per student required to support postsecondary access and affordability among those communities.

21. Continue and reinforce the access and remediation role of colleges to accommodate special populations in urban and rural areas and economically disadvantaged regions.

A New College Charter

...THE PATHWAY TO THE FUTURE

Ontario colleges are a success story for postsecondary education in Canada. In the 35 years they have existed, they have consistently provided accessible, affordable, cost-effective and high-quality education for students. The evidence of their success is in their increasing year-over-year enrolments and high graduate employment rates. It is in their strong track record of partnerships with business. It is in the countless ways they have benefited the communities in which they are located. Ontario colleges have become standard-setters in postsecondary education.

Adapting to Change

One of the reasons Ontario's colleges have been so successful is because they have anticipated and readily adapted to change. They have dealt well with market and operating pressures in the past. Faced with increased enrolments and reduced operating grants, they have been able to meet the immediate pressures by increasing tuition and developing new sources of revenue.

A study commissioned by ACAATO, "*Future College Capacity Issues Resulting from the Double Cohort and Other Demographic Considerations*" by KPMG (November 2000) identified the current corporate governance model as a restriction on college activities, flexibility and responsiveness to react to dramatic changes such as the enrolment increases. Colleges are not well-equipped to respond to the pressures of increased enrolment, demands on existing facilities and the need to recruit faculty. Unlike universities, colleges are currently Crown agencies and must adhere to the financial management and administrative controls set by the Ministry. They compensate and reward faculty based on centrally controlled decisions that do not reflect global or local market conditions or skill levels. They require Ministry approval before entering into any partnership arrangements involving shared risk. They cannot pledge any assets as security to finance long-term debt, and must meet long-term financing needs only through current year operating grants, tuition fees and other in-year revenues.

The growth colleges expect in the near future cannot be financed by tuition fees and current operating grants only. There are other policy and governance issues that have to be addressed to ensure that colleges have the capacity to meet and sustain their tradition of quality and adaptability to changing needs. It is clear that decisions will need to be made today to prepare for the future.

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Raising the Bar on Governance and Accountability

The Task Force heard from many in the college sector during its work. In fact, there were several proposals that addressed issues of governance and accountability and the new charter directly.

- **A New College Charter, Sheridan College**—a proposal for a new charter to vest a greater accountability in local governing boards to allow colleges to define excellence and access in terms of their own institutional missions and in response to their communities.
- **High Quality Education, Access for Students Affordability and Accountability, Ontario Community College Student Parliamentary Association**—a submission that dealt with the students' views on financial aid, governance, information systems, students fees and transferability.
- **Streamlining of Program Approval Process, Georgian College**—a submission on the current provincial approval process and the failure to properly recognize established centres of excellence, which results in unnecessary and costly duplication of new programs at various colleges.
- **System-Wide Efficiencies for Learner Centred Reinvestment, Fanshawe College**—a submission for eliminating the Council of Regents, streamlining external audit requirements restructuring the program approval process, and combining the college and university application services.

In addition to the proposals and submissions, the Task Force also conducted Roundtable discussions on governance and accountability. One recurring issue that was raised in every forum was the role of the board of governors and its accountability for human resources. In a submission to the Task Force, the Committee of Presidents described its efforts to identify improved human resource management models as a system-wide priority. Since 1997, "the colleges have been searching for solutions to the ineffective, inefficient and non-accountable elements of the collective bargaining process." While it is clear that the Council of Regents is an agent of government, it is not clear that it is accepted as the agent for the employer, which is the individual college board of governors. The discussions during the Roundtable sessions identified this issue as well:

> *"….absolute consensus by 25 colleges that we need a new model for human resource management. We need to be able to appoint our governors locally."*
> – College Chair

> *"Align the authority and accountability structures including program approval and labour relations so that the Board is focused as the governing body of an institution."*
> – College President

Envisioning the Future

Although the challenges and demands of the past were well articulated to the Task Force, the solution can be sought by looking forward. What will colleges look like as they move into the 21st century? Will they meet the challenges of global excellence? These questions have been the subject of discussion and debate since the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board (OJIB) called for a new college charter in their March 1999 report. The Task Force supports the OJIB vision for colleges to

Raising the Bar on Governance and Accountability

The Task Force heard from many in the college sector during its work. In fact, there were several proposals that addressed issues of governance and accountability and the new charter directly.

- **A New College Charter, Sheridan College**—a proposal for a new charter to vest a greater accountability in local governing boards to allow colleges to define excellence and access in terms of their own institutional missions and in response to their communities.
- **High Quality Education, Access for Students Affordability and Accountability, Ontario Community College Student Parliamentary Association**—a submission that dealt with the students' views on financial aid, governance, information systems, students fees and transferability.
- **Streamlining of Program Approval Process, Georgian College**—a submission on the current provincial approval process and the failure to properly recognize established centres of excellence, which results in unnecessary and costly duplication of new programs at various colleges.
- **System-Wide Efficiencies for Learner Centred Reinvestment, Fanshawe College**—a submission for eliminating the Council of Regents, streamlining external audit requirements restructuring the program approval process, and combining the college and university application services.

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This vision for change is:

- High quality education and training
- Flexibility in meeting emerging skill requirements driven by student and employer needs
- Key role in economic development; contribution to sustainable prosperity
- Global excellence measured by outcomes

This vision will be achieved by:

- Promoting culture of active and ongoing partnerships with the private sector
- Using creative approaches to equipping people with skills
- Increasing cooperation and collaboration between colleges and universities
- Increasing specialization, including applied degree and applied research
- Continuing emphasis on access

For the purposes of the Task Force discussions, we adopted the definition of "charter" as being the legislative, regulatory and policy framework under which colleges operate.

Moving Beyond the *Status Quo*

The "new college charter" is meant to be the framework that will align the vision with the appropriate governance and administrative models to ensure success. Such a governance model needs to:

Address the trends and demands currently facing colleges

- The need to be responsive and market oriented
- Fully explore sources of revenue that are not student based
- Maintain a focus on the primary mandate of education and training
- Dealing with the layers of regulation, process and administrative controls
- The need to be competitive in a government controlled market

Fulfill the vision of the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board

- Pursue public-private partnership
- Increased college and university collaboration
- Meeting the needs of students, including credit recognition and applied degrees

Meet the challenges for the future

- Increasing specialization and differentiation of each college
- Immediate enrolment increases
- Increased collaboration within the postsecondary sector

Ensure public accountability for public resources

- Annual public reporting focused on results and performance against their plan
- Community, student, employer representation elected by local boards
- Government relationship defined in mission-specific agreements

The Task Force heard time and time again that the *status quo* is not an option. To test this assertion, we considered how this new vision for the future might be achieved under the "old college charter." Without a change to the legislative, regulatory or policy framework currently governing colleges, the attempt to achieve the new vision would be through continued reliance on centralized and government controlled approaches. The scenario is less than optimal.

The "New Vision" under the *Status Quo*:

- **Quality control** would rely on government approval and the establishment of performance indicators.
- **Competition and responsiveness** would, again, be controlled by government approvals rather than driven by student and employer demand.
- **Flexibility in responding to market needs** would be determined by the timeliness of government approvals and available resources within the Ministry.
- **Colleges' role in economic development** would be the result of government-managed regional economic development plans. Collaboration within the sector would be determined and directed by government.
- **Performance indicators and benchmarks would be established for annual reporting.**

It would prove difficult and impractical to continue imposing centralized controls on an increasingly decentralized sector; 'head office' would be hard-pressed to keep pace with activities within colleges. The Ministry would need additional expert resources to direct the specialized missions and economic development plans of the colleges. Ministry staff would require far more current and relevant knowledge of public-private partnerships, new technologies and a much greater capacity to oversee each and every partnership proposal involving shared benefit and shared risk. Special attention would have to be paid to ensuring that appropriate risk assessment and management strategies are introduced.

In juxtaposing the current governance model and administrative practices with what is needed to realize this new vision, **the Task Force drew the conclusion that the new vision could not be achieved under the current governance and administrative model.** It is clear that the 35-year old legislation that created the colleges is dated and reflects the circumstances and thinking of the day about the role of government in economic development, planning and central control. A 1960's economic model is no longer workable for 21st century institutions.

The New College Charter

Although there was consensus on the vision for change, the pathway to this vision was less certain.

There has been no shortage of effort or good intentions in trying to find alternative governance and administrative models. ACAATO prepared a paper and conducted a consultation on the new college charter, including strategic human resources needs. ACAATO also commissioned work on possible governance models and administrative practices for colleges. The resulting paper[11] provided an overview of government's guidelines for crown agencies and describes options for the college-government relationship.

The Task Force also identified possible governance models to fulfil the vision for colleges for the 21st century. The models parallel those identified by ACAATO:

- **Current model**—the *status quo* as a crown agency, with a high level of administrative and management controls by the government.
- **Enhanced powers**—the *status quo*, with additional administrative and management powers as approved by the government.
- **New entity operating within a charter framework**—each college is a non-profit corporation operating under a common piece of legislation with roles and responsibilities identified.
- **University type charter**—each college is a non-profit corporation with its own legislation.
- **Private, for-profit model**—created under the new legislation, *Postsecondary Excellence and Choice Act, 2000*.

Twenty-five individually legislated university-type Charters were seen as untenable for the college sector. The private, for-profit model was workable for new developments, but not for public education with public assets. Although there are a few advantages of the Enhanced Powers model, it was regarded as a 'process solution' to nagging problems from the past that would help relieve some of the demands on the Ministry, but not a pathway for the new vision. It was also not clear why the Ministry would assume 100 percent of the responsibility for review, setting administrative policies and procedures and providing approval for legal partnership agreements when public funding is little more than 40 percent and as low as 25 percent in some colleges. After 35 years, the colleges, both the independent boards of governors and administration, should have the capacity to responsibly manage their affairs and be accountable for results and public resources.

To test the alternative to the *status quo*, we considered how this new vision might be achieved under the "new college charter." With changes to the legislative, regulatory and policy framework, the new vision would be achieved through differentiated mission and strategic leadership by the government. The proposed scenario is as follows:

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[11] *A Report to ACAATO on Alternative Relationship Models Between the Government and Colleges*

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New Vision under New Charter—New Entity Model

- **Quality control** would be based on best practice and academic, student and business input to program development, program review and performance indicators. Academic standards would be set and programs accredited by Quality Assessment Board.
- **Competition and responsiveness** would be driven by students, community and employer needs.
- **Flexibility in responding to market needs** would be through up-to-date programs with leading instructors in the college working with program advisory committees .
- **College's role in economic development** would be as an integral partner in the regional economy, working in partnership with other public sector institutions, being an expert resource to local business and being a magnet for business. Collaboration would be the result of community/regional needs within the broader framework of postsecondary education in Ontario.
- **Differentiated missions would be reflected in individual Memoranda of Understanding between each institution and government.**
- **Performance indicators and benchmarks** would be established for annual public reporting.

The Task Force believes that the New Entity-Charter Framework is the most viable pathway for achieving the 21st century vision. This approach acknowledges the differentiated missions of individual colleges while accommodating the development of a province-wide strategy for this part of the postsecondary sector. It provides the flexibility needed for colleges to provide quality education and remain responsive to student, employer and regional needs. It enables full partnerships between colleges and business and colleges with other players in the postsecondary sector. It sets out clear expectations for performance, roles and responsibilities, and can be the basis for a strong accountability relationship between the colleges and the Ministry. Government appointments to the Board of Governors would be made on a proportionate basis to the public funding received by the individual college.

Clear Benefits from Clear Responsibility

- Government sets directions and "steers" the sector
- Independent boards of governors are responsible and accountable for "doing their job"
- Quality assurance driven by best practice, performance indicators and accreditation
- Student voice at the table
- Open and varied opportunities for partnerships with other public sector organizations
- Potential for mutual benefit partnerships with the private sector
- Commercial "spin-off" possible with the private sector
- Ability to recruit in globally competitive skill areas
- Ability to set compensation to global and local market conditions
- Public accountability through public reporting

Future Directions

Moving to this new governance model should be an evolutionary process—a careful, planned transition—that will occur over three years. The new college charter framework is not a linear continuum with a single end point. Rather, it offers a

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Future Directions

Moving to this new governance model should be an evolutionary process—a careful, planned transition—that will occur over three years. The new college charter framework is not a linear continuum with a single end point. Rather, it offers a spectrum of postsecondary education choices that build on the multiple points of strengths and leadership in the colleges in support of public objectives for postsecondary education. Movement through this process is based on careful assessment that the necessary administrative practices are in place, that institutions have the capacity to take on new responsibilities and that quality assurance to students and employers is certain.

Some colleges will find their specialization in offering quality comprehensive programs for their region/community. Some will serve a community that is not geographically defined, but sector specific. Some will provide access programs to specific groups and special needs. Some will create programs offering applied degrees and will focus on opportunities to pursue applied research. New polytechnic institutes could emerge.

There will likely be administrative collaboration and shared services that will enable colleges to work cooperatively to serve their students. There will be an increased number of transfer agreements and collaborative programs that will be focused on sectoral or strategic areas of education and training. As a result, the areas for strategic public investment will become clear.

This evolution will be facilitated by a number of strategies and mechanisms—identifying and sharing best practices, individual and system-wide assessments, financial review, and risk assessment. The first year of the transition will be characterized by assessing the strengths and determining the strategies for building the necessary capacity. At the end of the first year, all colleges will have become more independent and will have good financial and administrative practices in place and effective and accountable governance. The second and third year will see all colleges continuing to build their foundation strengths, and there will be opportunities for individual colleges to pursue greater differentiation and specialization.

Since the Task Force considered this proposal to be the most significant recommendation for transformation and change, we felt it was important to begin the transition with a plan. This plan, "A New College Charter: The Transition Plan" (which is in Appendix D to the Report) sets out the key elements to facilitate this evolution to a new governance model.[12] The plan outlines the key roles and responsibilities for college boards and administration. They are: assurance and demonstration of quality education, effective and accountable governance, strategic human resource management, sound financial and administrative practices and capacity and know-how to build partnerships. The transition plan sets outs the strategies and mechanisms to build the necessary capacity for the future to meet the obligations of these roles and responsibilities, as well as the success factors that must be met for further evolution.

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[12] See Appendix D, "A New College Charter: The Transition Plan."

RECOMMENDATION: A NEW COLLEGE CHARTER

22. A new college charter should be developed and based on the governance model and administrative practices of a not-for-profit corporation operating under a common legislative framework.

RECOMMENDATION: TRANSITION PLAN TO THE NEW COLLEGE CHARTER

23. A careful plan for transition should be developed that sets out the framework for the new college charter in legislation, regulation and policy.

The governance models and administrative practices will be set out in this framework. This transition plan, as proposed by the Task Force, is designed to move the college sector to successful implementation of the new charter and the new vision.

The transition is time limited and should be facilitated by the Ministry with the support of expert resources. Colleges should have available to them both the financial and expert resources to assist them in evaluating their progress in transition and in taking the necessary steps to become the new entity.

24. Eliminate the Council of Regents

With the establishment of a common legislative framework that sets out the role and responsibility of independent and accountable boards of governors and the successful implementation of the transition plan, the role historically provided by the Council of Regents is no longer needed.

Accountability and Reporting:

...CUTTING THROUGH THE CLUTTER

A Decade of Dialogue

Accountability and reporting in postsecondary education are by no means new issues; they have been examined and re-examined in a decade of reports, studies and task forces in Ontario. Nor are these concerns confined to Ontario, or even Canada. Accountability in postsecondary education has been the subject of intense debate around the world, just as it has been in Ontario. There is in almost every developed nation an active debate on how publicly-funded institutions can improve accountability, while meeting public expectations, ensuring quality education and respecting institutional missions and mandates.

The Investing in Students Task Force heard from a variety of postsecondary stakeholders, many of who are all too familiar with the ongoing debate about accountability and reporting.

- The Task Force on University Accountability kicked off the debate in 1993 when it called for a stronger accountability framework, more effective governing bodies, improved information management, and the establishment of an independent monitoring body.
- Upon reviewing the college accountability and reporting framework in 1996 and again in 1998, the Ontario Provincial Auditor reinforced the need for clear and measurable goals, effective performance tracking and reporting systems, public reports on goal achievement, more collaboration and consistent funding policies.
- In 1997, the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO) issued *An Accountability Framework for Ontario's Community Colleges*, which included guiding principles for accountability and performance measures for the college system based on student satisfaction, post-college outcomes, graduate satisfaction, employer satisfaction and quality assurance.
- Also in 1997, the Finance Minister announced the *Public Sector Accountability Act*, legislation that will require institutions to meet clearly identified objectives and results, performance measurement, and public reporting of progress.
- The Ministry has introduced and implemented some performance indicators to measure goals of excellence and accountability for the colleges and universities. In 1998/99, the government announced that all postsecondary institutions receiving Ontario Student Loans would be required to provide students with performance indicators on graduate employment rates, graduation rates and loan default rates.
- In 1999 the Ontario Provincial Auditor identified the need for clear goals and expectations, progress reports, processes for continual improvement and sharing of best practices in its system-wide review of the Ministry's accountability framework for university funding. In response, the Ministry has been working with the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) on an accountability framework.
- In 2001, the Ontario Finance Review Commission is expected to make further recommendations on public sector accountability for all transfer payment recipients.
- January 5, 2001, marked the release of the *Employment Profile* for college graduates for 1998/99, an annual report providing data on performance indicators.

Although the Ministry Business Plan contains goals and objectives for postsecondary education, they are not the only statements of public objectives. *The Blueprint* and the *Ontario Jobs and Investment Board* report also contain statements of public goals and objectives. Taken together there are several commitments that serve as goals and objectives for postsecondary education. These include:

- Every willing and qualified Ontario student will continue to be able to attend college or university
- University/college collaboration to offer joint programs geared to helping students find jobs and move easily between the two systems
- A postsecondary system that is accountable to parents, students and taxpayers and provides students with the knowledge and skills essential to succeed in a global economy
- Excellence in research and innovation on an international scale

These commitments indicate a readiness to act on putting clear accountability and reporting systems in place.

A decade of information-gathering and review has brought the system to the point where the issues are well understood and solutions are now in sight. The Investing in Students Task Force will build on this accumulated knowledge and shared understanding to offer a set of practical, actionable recommendations for reform that will meet the acknowledged needs of all postsecondary stakeholders.

Stumbling Blocks to Accountability

The PricewaterhouseCoopers study on the financial health of publicly funded institutions identified a number of stumbling blocks in the present system of accountability:

"The timeliness of the data prevents an analysis of the most current financial position of each institution. This is a major weakness in the Ontario institutional data set because it means that important decisions must be made with outdated data and the problems might be masked or fail to be incorporated into assessments of comparative institutional performance. In addition, members of governing bodies and the administrators at each institution are at a disadvantage when reporting on the activities of the current year due to the absence of comparative data from competing institutions."

The Voice of the Public

Although not necessarily active participants in postsecondary education, members of the public are the funders of education and among the beneficiaries of a system that contributes to the economic and social well-being of society at large. The public, as investors in a system of public education, has a reasonable expectation that its investment will be well managed. The growing importance of postsecondary institutions' ability to provide future generations with the skills they need to be thinking and informed citizens, as well as productive and contributing members of the workforce is acknowledged.

The Council of Ministers of Education found that Canadians, whether they are current or past students, have very clear expectations of postsecondary education. Among those expectations are that postsecondary education:

- be affordable and accessible to Canadians throughout their lives
- graduate young people who are independent, knowledgeable, versatile and creative—in other words, able to take up the many challenges that the 21st century will present
- prepare graduates for good jobs
- make vital contributions to the social and cultural well-being of the country[13]

The Voice of Students

Recognizing that students are among the most important and most knowledgeable stakeholders, the Task Force held three Roundtables specifically for students, met with student groups and had student representatives present at the governance and accountability Roundtables.

A recurrent theme that emerged during these sessions was the need for students to be more involved in decision-making—particularly as they are responsible for an increasing share of the cost of education. They supported stronger student input and representation in the governance of postsecondary institutions, and suggested that student participation should not be limited to consultations. Students suggested that they could be better represented on institution boards or committees, and that they could participate more in surveys, focus groups and other evaluation processes.

In a meeting with Task Force members, the Canadian Federation of Students—Ontario suggested that the student voice needs to be heard and that students need better representation on boards. In its submission to the Task Force, *"High Quality Education, Access for Students, Affordability and Accountability,"* the Ontario Community College Student Parliamentary Association underscored the need for increased interaction between the students and administration. The Association suggested that the right for student governments to exist should be included in any legislative change related to colleges, and that student governors be involved on all committees where decisions being made will affect their constituents.

The Voice of Institutions

The most common model for accountability in publicly funded postsecondary education is for government to provide the framework, set overall policy objectives, monitor achievements and perhaps use incentives to encourage the meeting of those objectives. In turn, governing bodies and administrations are expected to produce outcomes of academic quality and student success.

The need for a public vision and a clear set of goals and priorities was considered important for governing boards to carry out their responsibilities effectively. It is from this vision that all other elements of an accountability framework follow.

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[13] *A Report on Public Expectations of Postsecondary Education in Canada*, February 1999.

Lessons from Other Places—Accountability

- **Illinois Commitment: Partnerships, Opportunities and Excellence**—The State of Illinois established a citizen's charter for higher education in which the stated goals include recognition of its role in economic growth, no citizen denied an opportunity because of financial need and institutions will improve productivity, cost effectiveness and accountability.
- **The Association of Governing Boards (AGB) in the United States issued a Statement on Institutional Governance**, which sets out the template for good practices and policy guidelines for boards to adapt to their needs. The principles clarify roles and responsibilities, recommend the adoption of good practices for decision-making and management information. The AGB also conducted a study, ***Bridging the Gap Between State Government and Higher Education***, which examined the demands placed on governors.
- **The Higher Education Funding Council of England** released a study in 2000 that provided an estimate of the costs associated with the uncoordinated, duplicated and redundant reporting requirements.
- **The Higher Education Funding Council of England in the UK** developed a set of performance measures to ensure that policy decisions can be made on the basis of consistent and reliable information.
- **The Canadian Institute for Health Information** has developed system-wide indicators that measure many aspects of performance, including services, financial and effectiveness indicators.
- **The Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs in Australia** published *Benchmarking, A Manual for Australian Universities*, which contains well-tested benchmarks in a common, easy to use format.

It is difficult for boards to function when they do not have an accurate idea of the overall environment and outlook for the future. Given the board's fiduciary responsibilities for public funds, the lack of certainty and predictability of funding makes it difficult for boards to meet their responsibilities to stakeholders.

There is growing concern among institutions about the ever-increasing burden of accountability requirements. The number of regular reports required by the Ministry each year (41 for universities and 46 for colleges), in addition to an increasing number of special audits, has placed a strain on resources.

> *"The real cost lies not in the billings by our auditors, but in thousands of hours of staff time associated with preparing the records upon which these audits are based....Every hour and every dollar spent is an hour and dollar diverted from our primary objectives – the provision of high quality education and service to our students."*
> --Vice-President, University

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Raising the Bar on Reporting

Both ACAATO and COU have addressed the need to balance reporting requirements with accountability objectives:

- **Minimizing Financial Audit Costs—Maximizing Accountability (ACAATO)** recommends the use of internal audits, Chief Financial Officers' certifications, peer reviews and other accountability measures instead of costly one-off special audits.
- **Consolidation of Financial and Related Government Reporting Requirements (COU)** offers proposals on consolidating and streamlining aspects of financial, grant and fee-related reporting to the provincial government.

Performance indicators and benchmarks are key to effective communications, management and accountability. There is also a need for two-way communications with government in the development of performance measures and benchmarks. The development of further indicators should be done cooperatively, and not by government alone. In turn, institutions should be exploring opportunities to communicate their success and demonstrate their responsiveness to changing circumstances by meeting measures of accountability. Twelve colleges from across Canada participate in a benchmarking project. Loyalist College has been able to benchmark its institutional and management and support costs to other colleges in the country as the second lowest as a percentage of total operating costs.

Many of the proposals received by the Task Force identified the need to develop management and financial information systems to support the development of benchmarks. The Ontario University Purchasing Management Association (OUPMA) has several years of building the information for benchmarks and proposed to go to the next step:

- **Improved Benchmarking and Training, COU**—a proposal to acquire membership in benchmarking organizations.

Future Directions

Publicly funded institutions need a clear framework within which to operate. The role of government is to set the framework within which postsecondary institutions are established and operate. The government articulates public policy objectives and ensures that achievement can be monitored fairly and openly. The government may use occasional incentives to achieve certain objectives. The role of the governing boards and administrators is to develop plans for delivering their mission. Overlaying these roles is the need for institutional missions to reflect those overall public policy objectives for higher education, consistent with their applied learning, teaching and research mandate.

Increasingly, governing boards must have the skills, knowledge and experience to define a strategic vision for the large and complex institutions they preside over. All governors will ensure the well being of the institution, hold fiduciary responsibility and be free from conflict. The voice of stakeholders should be heard by the board and contribute to defining the vision for the institution. The governing board will consider its decisions in terms of the impact on students.

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Students are more than participants in the system. They are the most immediate beneficiaries of the system when it is working well, and the ones who are most disadvantaged when the system is flawed or underperforming. The student's perspective must be heard and considered.

Effective governance requires that governors have timely, up-to-date financial information. The establishment of financial health indicators that identify the risk and nature of risk for an institution would inform decision making at the board level, as well as at the system level. They would also provide a measure of the success of planning and budgetary controls, dependence on government grants and the strength of administrative operations within an institution.

> *"Currently, Ontario institutions do not have an accepted and standardized means of comparing their financial health with those of other Ontario institutions. Creation of a system of evaluating financial health would also create an incentive for Ontario institutions to keep track of their own financial health and further the attitude of fiscal responsibility within each institutions."*
> —PricewaterhouseCoopers Study Commissioned by the Task Force.

Made-in-Ontario Best Practices

Many submissions to the Task Force looked at best practices and innovation in Ontario postsecondary institutions in terms of accountability, governance and reporting. Some examples:

- **Lakehead University** recently restructured its standing committee of the Board of Governors in order to streamline activities, increase the exposure of governors to the operations of the university and broadened knowledge of management functions. The student liaison committee provides input from the student body. In addition, non-governor members on each standing committee provide for increased student participation.
- **Wilfrid Laurier University** developed an accountability matrix in order to ensure the objectives of its strategic plan are met. The matrix is used in the planning process and reviewed annually to determine progress.
- **York University's** annual Planning, Budget and Accountability report contains information about the mission and business plan for the institution, information on strategic priorities and progress, audited financial information and results on key performance indicators.

A Single Accountability Framework

Colleges and universities need a single accountability framework to clarify roles and responsibilities for stakeholders in the postsecondary system and to guide system reforms. There should be a balance between the need for institutions to provide clear and transparent accountability on the one hand and the time has come to streamline processes and reporting requirements on the other.

RECOMMENDATION: A SINGLE ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

25. Establish an accountability framework that is based on a public vision and set of goals for postsecondary education in Ontario.

This framework would have a foundation common to both colleges and universities. The key elements of this framework would be an established institutional mission, processes for effective governance, including a role for student governors, annual public reporting, tracking and monitoring performance indicators and the assurance of continuing best practice using benchmark information.

26. Replace many existing reporting requirements with an annual report produced by each institution and issued to the public and the government.

Colleges and universities would produce public reports that should include:

- the institution's mission, key strategies and accomplishments
- progress toward goals defined by performance indicators
- performance for institution goals as well as system-wide goals
- participation rates and access for students
- audited financial statements
- other reports that may be required by the government

RECOMMENDATION: CUTTING RED TAPE

27. Consolidate reporting and build on existing information where possible.

The time has also come to review all reporting requirements and eliminate those that are not required, and streamline or consolidate others.

Reporting should be based on a common source of financial and management information so that institutions can develop an annual report that includes audited financial statements and incorporates strategic reporting requirements.

Create a common source of financial and management information in order to build the information for annual reports, performance indicators and comparative benchmarks.

RECOMMENDATION: MEANINGFUL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

28. Develop a common set of performance indicators and benchmarks of best practice to provide reliable information and a consistent set of measures on the performance of the higher education sector.

These performance indicators, developed in cooperation between the government and institutions, would support the public vision, goals and objectives for postsecondary education in Ontario. Some of the performance indicators would provide information on the system as a whole and as such can be used in both the college and university sector.

Effective benchmarks should be clearly matched to expected outcomes and provide for comparison, not only with postsecondary institutions within Ontario and Canada, but also with the best institutions in the world.

A working group of representatives from the Council of Ontario Universities, Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario, and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, should develop these performance indicators and benchmarks.

29. Establish Financial Health Indicators for use in Ontario institutions.

These indicators would be developed in collaboration between the government, the institutions and experts in accounting. Such indicators can be used by individual institutions as well as system-wide. These indicators would provide information on the system as a whole, and as such, can be used in both the college and university sector. Although there will be recognition of the characteristics of Ontario postsecondary education, these indicators will enable international comparison.

The Next Wave of Collaboration

...BUILDING ON THE SUCCESSES OF THE PAST

As we look to the future, we must build on the strengths of the past. The need for collaboration is well understood in Ontario's postsecondary sector. Many of the administrative innovations and best practices the Task Force collected from the province's postsecondary institutions reflect approaches that are highly collaborative.

The Voice of Institutions

> *"There are many opportunities for transformational projects that truly change the system rather than doing more of the same."*
> -- Roundtable participant

Ontario has a history of successful collaborations in administration, purchasing, libraries, programming, facilities, revenue generation, admissions processing, transcripts, and IT software licenses. Large scale collaboration of benefit to the sector as a whole have been developed and led by both COU and ACAATO on behalf of universities and colleges. Some collaboration has been developed on a regional basis in support of institutional mission and mandate, while other collaborations have been championed by individuals.

Collaboration should support the accessibility and quality of education, while enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness. There are already many collaborative arrangements in Ontario that provide a foundation for further collaboration in other areas. In the education system, collaboration is most often found in common support functions and processes. Functional collaborations can help alleviate immediate pressures, financial or operational, or provide longer-term solutions to broader problems.

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Lessons from Other Places—Collaborative Models

Centres of Enterprise—With limited resources and few specialists, the creation of a Centre of Enterprise to share such expertise makes sense. In the UK, for instance, 16 universities in the Midlands collaborate to provide seminars and workshops to train administrative and clerical support staff.

Financial Management Information System—Many governments are working with higher education systems to streamline system-wide financial reporting. In Florida, a consortium of colleges has developed a financial management information system that provides data for student services, personnel and human resources and finance in an integrated format that is used by both the state and the college.

Regional Consortia—The Mid-Western Higher Education Consortium (MHEC) is a regional consortium that engages in a number of cooperative ventures to increase productivity, reduce administrative costs and improve the quality of education. MHEC has developed master contracts and master licensing agreements for its members to achieve significant cost reductions, not just in purchases, but also in support, maintenance and training agreements. Its programs include SAMS (scheduling and management software) and the creation of the VPN (virtual private network). At the end of its first three-year contract, the program generated over $23 million in equipment and service sales to more than 100 institutions, representing savings in excess of $7 million.

Common Information and Reporting Systems—Collaboration in developing common information and reporting is enabling institutions to produce system-wide benchmarks for performance improvement. In the United Kingdom, the Higher Education Funding Council of England worked with the postsecondary sector to produce guidelines on financial management and treasury management practices. These provide measurements for testing financial systems, managing audit reviews and installing computer systems.

From the proposals received by the Task Force, it was obvious that there is a strong track record of success in collaboration and great interest in pursuing further collaboration in many areas that are key to effective administrative operations and of benefit to students, both directly and indirectly. The major opportunities for collaboration, as identified through the proposals to the Task Force, are improvements in administrative practices using technology, the obvious efficiencies in shared services, the ability to realize the leverage of investment in library services, the development of information and planning tools for making better use of existing facilities, and the advantages of sharing specialized expertise.

Raising the Bar on the Use of Technology for System-Wide Solutions

Many proposals identified the use of information technology to build and improve basic administrative operations. The proposals may be site-specific, but have the potential to be extended to other institutions or system-wide.

- **Electronic Procurement, University of Toronto**, a proposal to develop and implement an on-line electronic catalogue and e-procurement solution for the purchase of goods and services.
- **Maximizing Employee Transaction Efficiency, York University**, a proposal for process improvement and design in areas of recruitment and hiring documentation, compensation administration, position control and master file data changes. Other institutions that use similar software can benefit from York's experience.
- **Supplier Portal, Council of Ontario Universities**, a proposal to create a cooperative supplier portal that would be managed and maintained by Ontario university purchasers.

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Raising the Bar on Shared Services

With a focus on specialized services and administrative and financial management information systems, many proposals identified the use of information technology as a platform to share services within a region, across the province between institutions with similar systems or system-wide.

- **Implementing Shared Administrative Services, Conestoga College, Fanshawe College, Lambton College and St. Clair College**, a proposal to develop new information systems and re-design business processes on a collaborative basis.
- **Fanshawe/Lambton Administrative Collaboration, Fanshawe College and Lambton College** propose a shared service agreement focusing on facilities management, information technology, human resources and finance.
- **Pooling Ontario University Pension Assets in One Master Fund, Council of Ontario Universities,** a proposals to pool pension fund assets.
- **Une Alliance Stratégique—Collaboration portant sur les services administratifs, Collège Boréal and Collège des Grands Lacs**, an administrative agreement whereby Collège des Grands Lacs will purchase payroll and human resource services from Collège Boréal. If this experience is successful, the two colleges will collaborate in other administrative areas.

Raising the Bar on Library Services

Students welcome any investment in library services and institutions responded with collaborative proposals.

- **Library Automation Consortium, Algoma University College and Northern Michigan University** – a joint venture with Northern Michigan University to move to a new integrated automated library system.
- **North Bay Health Library Services, Nipissing University, Canadore College and North Bay Hospital** – a shared agreement for access to medical literature for the students, health care professionals and the public.
- **Ottawa Smart Libraries, Carleton University, University of Ottawa, Algonquin College, La Cité Collégiale, Ottawa Public Library, St. Paul University** –a proposal to develop a common integrated library system through information technology and Web-based services.
- **Seamless Reciprocal Library Use for University of Toronto and Sheridan College Students and Staff, University of Toronto and Sheridan College** – a proposal to provide for reciprocal access to library services and facilities for students and staff at Sheridan and University of Toronto.

Raising the Bar on Managing the Existing Physical Plant

Many institutions are looking for ways to manage their physical facilities better and obtain information that will enable them to make better use of existing space:

- **Concurrent Delivery of Grade 11/12 and Year One College Programming, St. Clair College**, a pilot project with the local school board offering senior level secondary with first year college credits in order to make best use of existing space during a time of expected enrolment increases.
- **Institutional Space Inventory, Council of Ontario Universities**, a proposal to evaluate and implement a single approach to maintain a system-wide facilities inventory.
- **Maximo Standardization Project, Queen's University, Carleton University, University of Ottawa, York University, University of Windsor**, a proposal to establish a common software system that would provide for common information and benchmarking.
- **Space Management, University of Ottawa**, a proposal to implement a space management planning tool that would provide a central professional expertise in space management and an accountability mechanism.
- **Space Planning and Space Audit Program, McMaster University**, a proposal to implement a facilities inventory space planning tool and audit program.

Raising the Bar on Establishing Centres of Expertise

There are certain specialized, professional skills that all institutions need to manage their operations. Rather than each institution attempting to obtain all these specialized skills, many proposals recognized the efficiency in collaboration.

- **Collaboration on Pension Administration System, Council of Ontario Universities**—a proposal to create a separate organization to manage and administer a pension fund master trust.
- **Consortium on Training, Council of Ontario Universities**—a proposal for sharing technologically enhanced training tools in a number of common areas.
- **Internal Audit: Ontario University System-Wide Co-Sourcing, Council of Ontario Universities**—a proposal whereby universities would hire a single firm (or similar entity) that would provide a central store of specialized audit services in support of internal audit.

Future Directions

Reduced government funding, enrolment increases, technology investments, rising quality expectations among students and the public expectations are putting increasing pressure on Ontario's postsecondary institutions. Institutions recognize that collaboration and competition can complement one another. Collaboration can help institutions deliver non-core activities more effectively and at lower costs. Savings generated in common support functions and processes—purchasing, human resource systems, information technology systems, facilities planning, financial management systems and general administration—can be re-invested in core activities.

The next wave of collaboration will be of a new kind and a new order. Institutions that have only just begun to work with others will be challenged in the face of the pressures in the future. Institutions with an experience with collaboration will

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The next wave of collaboration will be of a new kind and a new order. Institutions that have only just begun to work with others will be challenged in the face of the pressures in the future. Institutions with an experience with collaboration will discover new and innovative ways to pursue even more. The Task Force was encouraged by the creativity and number of collaborative proposals it received and the number of collaboration administrative practices submitted. However, we cannot rest on past successes. The future pressures will demand collaborative solutions and all institutions will need to broaden and deepen their understanding of collaboration, and accelerate their activity.

Meeting Student Expectations

Students want seamless service delivery between institutions. They want improved services without extra costs—in short, more value for their tuition fees. They want more Web-based/on-line services that require standardized infrastructure, protocols and building blocks. And they want the ease of e-commerce and smart card technologies that save time, increase convenience, and enhance services.

Building the Platform for the Future

Institutions that are moving towards becoming Web-enabled for administrative, financial, admission, registration and student services are developing and offering courses and programs through distributed learning technologies (e-learning). They will require digital libraries that allow students and faculty to access resources directly from their workstations. IT investments do not always lead to lower operating costs, but they do contribute to cost avoidance and generate a reasonable return on investment. The size and scale of the investment and expertise that will be required means that a collaborative and even system-wide approach is the only solution.

Increasing Efficiencies

Collaboration leads to economies of scale, which in turn lead to greater efficiencies, particularly for smaller institutions. It also enables more communication sharing and forging of stronger and wider networks. Since institutions often adapt best practices that they have learned about through their networks, successful collaboration can open new opportunities for collaboration and often can include new participants.

Creating System-Wide Infrastructure for System-Wide Needs

All institutions need access to certain common information systems such as applications, transcripts and financial assistance. As the provincial government moves to establish clear accountability and reporting requirements for postsecondary institutions, there will be a shared interest in collaborating on any new investments for financial or administrative systems that would ease reporting and other administrative burdens.

Supporting the Community

Postsecondary institutions play an important role in their communities. Collaboration with other publicly funded institutions (hospitals, schools, municipalities) can eliminate duplicative activities, improve financial gains and reduce start-up and operating costs—benefits that are shared across the community. The enhanced presence of the postsecondary institution is an added benefit to the community.

There are several reasons why administrative improvements are better approached collaboratively. There are certain innovations that institutions will not pursue on their own because the financial investment exceeds their ability or the specialized expertise is not available. The significant up-front investments associated with large-scale projects prevent collaborative solutions from happening and potential savings can be lost. There are certain innovations that may not be taken because individual institutions on their own may not be able to anticipate or initiate broad-based collaboration. Institutions may need to be encouraged to adopt collaborative solutions.

RECOMMENDATION: ACCELERATE COLLABORATION IN THE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SECTOR

30. Encourage institutions to build on previous efforts and pursue investments in collaborations that have potential system-wide applicability.

Initiatives for collaboration will result in:

- Improved services for students
- Better use of existing resources and/or facilities
- Better use of scarce and specialized resources
- Increased efficiencies
- Development and implementation of compatible infrastructure
- Sustainable over the long term
- Further cost containment

RECOMMENDATION: SHARING INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE ON BEST PRACTICES

31. Establish a structure and mechanism for sharing the information and knowledge on best practices across the postsecondary sector.

Initially, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will take a leadership role in the development of a mechanism that will continue with the sharing of information about best practices, begun by the Investing in Students Task Force. Working with the Council of Ontario Universities and Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario, the Ministry will look to permanently establish this mechanism, possibly with the Quality Assessment Board.

Incentives for Change

...ADOPTING BEST PRACTICES

In considering future directions for postsecondary education, the Task Force was mindful of its mandate to "recommend ways to ensure a continuing focus on best practices and their implementation so that current and future spending is directed to meeting the changing needs of students." The student survey, the Roundtable discussions, the proposals submitted to the Task Force and the research into best practices around the world and in Ontario confirmed the urgent need for strategic and system-wide changes to meet the challenges facing the postsecondary sector over the next five years.

Students were vocal in their support of more efficient and student-centred administration. On the one hand, the need for improved student support services, a recurrent theme in the Roundtable discussions with students, would likely require additional funding. On the other hand, students were able to quickly identify the services at their institutions that they believed worked well and would serve as examples for others to follow.

Institutions note that many of the administrative changes required to meet the future pressures and demands—e-learning, for example—require significant seed funding. The infrastructure for innovation is expensive, and requires considerable investment at the front end. Ontario's postsecondary sector will fall behind its global peers if the pace and the scale of change are not accelerated.

> *"My sense is we will get there if we don't have a helping hand, but it is going to take ten years or more and it will be too late in terms of what students need or what institutions need in terms of resources. There needs to be incentives that we can put into the system to deepen the way we acquire resources together and the way that we can collaborate on the delivery of shared services."*
> –Roundtable participant

There is no shortage of creative thinking about how to address these challenges. The Task Force received many proposals from institutions, students and organizations that offered thoughtful advice and suggested innovative approaches to improving services and efficiencies. The Task Force was impressed with the thought and effort that had gone into these proposals, especially in light of the very tight timelines. All of the proposals that we received are summarized in the *Resource Document*, a supporting document to this Report.

Based on the input that received from the student survey, the Roundtables and proposals, the Task Force has identified three major priorities for creating incentives to spur change—Student-Centred Services, Institutional Improvements and Sector Wide Improvement Strategies. Under each of the priorities, there are areas that provide a focus and direction for change. For Student-Centred Services the areas for focus are: application and registration processes, seamless transfer, improved student support services, and access and support for e-learning. For Institutional Improvements, the areas for focus are effective use of existing physical facilities and cost effective administration. For Sector Wide Improvement Strategies the areas for focus are clear accountability and streamlined reporting, and mandate transition.

Without incentives, change will not occur quickly enough to meet imminent and pressing challenges that face postsecondary education. The changes urgently required must leverage the experience of some for the benefit of all. And because the scale and scope of some changes will put them beyond reach of institutions acting alone, many of these changes will best be achieved through effective collaboration and adoption of cost effective practices across the system.

The Task Force is recommending an incentive fund to promote collaboration and accelerate the pace of change in order to meet the mounting pressures on the system. In determining the amount for the fund, the Task Force used the following information on which to base its recommendation:

- PricewaterhouseCoopers identified potential savings from the postsecondary sector to be in the range of $74 - $88 million. These savings could be achieved through collaboration and benchmarking cost effective practices.
- Even in the short time frame for preparing proposals without being able to fully develop business plans, the sector was able to identify potential savings of $80 million. These savings could be achieved if there was support for the up-front investment, or system-wide strategies were in place to support initiatives at individual institutions.
- The investment required to support change in other public sector areas (hospitals, municipalities and education) averaged at 10% of the annual provincial grants. These investments provided for the initial costs associated with implementing changes that would result in improved service, cost savings and cost avoidance.
- The Alberta government recently announced a $25 million "boost" for postsecondary education in order to deal with immediate pressures on the system, including access and faculty renewal. Over and above that "boost", they provided additional funding for targeted programs and the performance envelope.
- Neighbouring states in the US are also increasing their investment in postsecondary education

Through this fund, Ontario institutions will be able to improve services to students to address pressures associated with enrolment increases, make better use of existing facilities, and ensure that the decision supports are in place for effective governance. The results from the implementation of this fund will be better services for students, potential cost savings and cost avoidance, and a focus on strategic decisions around sector wide infrastructure investments.

RECOMMENDATION: ESTABLISH A "TRANSFORMATION INCENTIVE FUND"

32. Establish an incentive fund with a goal to foster innovation and the adoption of best practice. This Fund will operate for a five-year period. The Task Force recommends that $80 million per year be allocated to this Fund.

The priority areas for the fund would be:

Student-Centred Services

- Application and transfer services
- Student support services
- Access and support for e-learning;

Institutional Improvements

- Use of physical plant
- Cost effective administration

Sector Wide Improvement Strategies

- Accountability and decision support
- Mandate transition toward a New College Charter.

Initiatives under this fund would meet the following policy objectives:

- Demonstrate a focus on quality services for students
- Support access to higher education for willing and qualified people within Ontario
- Improve efficiencies and effectiveness
- Enhance the global competitiveness of Ontario's postsecondary sector
- Proactively promote collaboration within the postsecondary sector
- Promote collaboration between postsecondary institutions that involves 'other' partners, such as school boards, municipalities, private sector, and not for profit sector.
- Institution based initiatives that demonstrate that this innovation could 'spark' other initiatives and can increase the pace and quality of change
- Provide for future cost avoidance

The success of the Incentive Fund will be ensured by the institutions and their associations, since they will be required to meet a number of pre-conditions, prior to approval of funds:

- Initiative proposed must be clearly tied to one or more of the Fund's policy objectives
- Proposals must clearly demonstrate how the outcomes will be measured and reported
- Proposals must clearly demonstrate how lessons learned in design and implementation will be shared and communicated across the postsecondary sector
- Proposals will provide the performance measures for administrative effectiveness and efficiency and indicate how these measures will be collected, reported on, and used on an ongoing basis
- Institutions will be accountable to report on outcomes to the public and government in their annual report.

33. Establish an advisory panel to review funding proposals and provide advice to government. The Panel will be in place for the five years of the fund. Membership on the panel will comprise Minister-appointed representatives from institutions, students, business and community organizations.

The government will set the criteria to be used in the review of proposals in accordance with the fund policy objectives. The criteria can include:

- Meeting the policy objectives
- Ensuring that all the pre-conditions to receive funds are in place (e.g., the institutions and their association have the management systems in place to report on measures, performance and outcomes)
- A solid business case is provided in the proposal
- The commitment of the institutions to the initiative is apparent.

The Advisory Panel will apply the criteria to the proposal submissions and will recommend proposals for funding to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The final decision to fund proposals will rest with the Ministry of

Training, Colleges and Universities and the Ministry will be responsible for administering the Fund in terms of management and reporting.

Demonstration of the Transformation Incentive Fund

The Task Force received 129 proposals from universities, colleges, students, businesses and community organizations. There were 30 from universities, 63 from colleges, nine joint proposals from colleges and universities, four from student groups and 23 from other organizations.

The Task Force did not have a fund of money to allocate; however, it conducted a review of the proposals received against the priorities, objectives and criteria for application. Based on that review, we can identify some proposals that serve as an example or illustration of the kind of change and action that we believe is needed to affect the results expected.

Student-Centred Services

Application and Transfer Services

Student-Centred Focus	
Easier access to information for applications and registration	"One-Stop Student Service Web Portal and Matching Physical Environment"—McMaster University "Quality Student Services Project"—Sheridan College "Recruitment Navigator"—University of Toronto
Streamlined registration and application for financial assistance processes	""One-Stop Shopping for Students"—ACAATO "Creating Greater Efficiencies in Student Financial Aid Administration"—COU
A clear and fair mechanism for transfer between institutions	"Ontario Electronic Postsecondary Transcript System" – ACAATO and COU (through OCAS and OUAC)

Improved Student Support Services

Student-Centred Focus	
Students identified the need for improved counselling services	"A Career and Degree Planning Tool for Applicants and Students"—University of Toronto "National Co-op and Student Internship Program Management" –Career Edge (a partnership proposal—no funding requested) "Student Academic Success Centre"—University of Ottawa
Improved Services on Campus	"E-Commerce/Retooled Retail Campus Bookstore"—Mohawk College "T-Card, the Multi Application Student Card"—University of Toronto

Student-Centred Focus	
Investment and Improvement in Library Services	"Library Automation Consortium"—Algoma University College and Northern Michigan University "North Bay Library Services"—Nipissing University, Canadore College and North Bay Hospital "Ottawa Smart Libraries"—Carleton University, University of Ottawa, Algonquin College, La Cité Collégiale, Ottawa Public Library, St. Paul University
Students with special needs can access their academic programs fully	"Implementation of Transition Program for Learning Disable Secondary Students Entering Algonquin College"—Algonquin College "Read-E: Student Portal for Readings in Alternative Formats"—University of Toronto

Access and Support for E-learning

Improved access to technology: it is available throughout the province, is affordable for students and enables all students to fully participate in educational programs	"Networked Educational Info-structure: Enhanced Accessibility and Cost Savings Through Multiple Collaboration"—University of Toronto
Service and training to support students and faculty in the development and delivery of e-learning programs	"Ontario French Language e-Learning Portal"—Collège Boréal, Collège des Grands Lacs, Contact Nord "Courses Via the Internet and Andragogical Support"—La Cité Collégiale
E-students can move within the postsecondary education sector in Ontario, Canada and the world with recognition for credits achieved	"E-learning—Education Innovation for Ontario"—Laurentian University "Learning Technology Systems Architecture: Sharing Resources In a Common Vision for e-learning"—Collège Boréal, Seneca College, TFO/TVO
Ensuring the platform for new technologies in learning	"Ontario E-learning/E-business College Consortium" Durham College, Centennial College and George Brown College.

Institutional Improvements

Effective Use of Existing Physical Facilities

How to make the best use of existing space and obtain information for managing it	"Concurrent Delivery of Grade 11/12 And Year One College Programming"—St. Clair College "Institutional Space Inventory System"—COU "Maximo Standardization Project"—Queen's University, Carleton University, University of Ottawa, York University, University of Windsor

Cost Effective Administration

Obtain efficiencies and deliver services using technology	"Electronic Procurement"—University of Toronto "Supplier Portal"—COU
Shared expert and specialized services	"Consortium on Training"—COU "Internal Audit: Ontario University System-Wide Co-Sourcing"—COU "Collaboration on Pension Administration System"—COU
Developing shared services that are cost effective and efficient	"Implementing Shared Administrative Services"—Conestoga College, Fanshawe College, Lambton College, St. Clair College "Implementing Shared Administrative Services"—Conestoga College, Fanshawe College, Lambton College, St. Clair College "Pooling Ontario University Pension Assets in One Master Fund"—COU "Une Alliance Stratégique—Collaboration portant sur les services administratifs"—Collège Boréal and Collège des Grands Lacs

Sector-Wide Improvement Strategies

Clear Accountability and Streamlined Reporting

Develop and maintain financial and management information systems to support effective governance	Consolidation of Financial and Related Government Reporting Requirements—COU "Minimizing Financial Audit Costs—Maximizing Accountability"—ACAATO
Collaborative efforts to develop performance indicators and benchmarks	"Improved Benchmarking and Training"—COU

Mandate Transition Towards a New College Charter

Recognize the importance of postsecondary institutions in their community and region while being effective and efficient	"Collaborative Partnership Agreement: Initiating a Strategic Alliance" – Canadore College and Georgian College "Enhanced Collaboration between Sault College and Sault Area Hospitals"—Sault College and Sault Area Hospitals
Support an institution's efforts in building capacity for responsible and accountable practices	"Administrative Restructuring and Re-Engineering to Support College Strategic Direction"—Canadore College "Transferring Primary Accountability for Program Approval to College Boards"—Sheridan College

Meeting the Mandate

When the Investing in Students Task Force was established in September, 2000, we realized that to address all of the items contained in our mandate from the Minister of Training Colleges and Universities was a large task to complete in a short period of time. However, the interest and input that we received from all the stakeholders in postsecondary education, was impressive and we appreciate the contribution made by all in sharing their ideas, proposals, research and time. Students, in particular, were key contributors, and their perspective, input, suggestions and recommendations have all been carefully considered.

The purpose of the Task Force is to advise the Minister on ways to ensure that public funds supporting postsecondary education are directed at providing the highest quality of education while ensuring access for students, affordability and accountability. In conducting this review, the Task Force examined best practices in Ontario and comparable initiatives in other jurisdictions.

As part of its work, the Task Force reviewed the experience of other jurisdictions and surveyed Ontario institutions for examples of administrative practices. These reports have been made available as part of the Report of the Task Force and are all contained in a supporting document to this Report, *Best Practices in Ontario and Other Jurisdictions*

In developing its recommendations, the Task Force will give full consideration to the significant role that postsecondary institutions play in their local communities, the need to maintain service in local communities while assessing how service delivery may be made more effective, and the need to continue to offer postsecondary education opportunities in English and French in all regions of the province.

In addressing this part of its mandate, the Task Force obtained the views and input of the francophone community through specific Roundtable discussions as well as facilitated discussions with community representatives and presidents of French language institutions. Through these discussions, the Task Force identified the need for a province wide vision for the 21st century that acknowledges differentiated mandates and encourages complementary missions of postsecondary institutions. Federal and provincial governments should support and recognize the need for collaboration and ensure access for special populations.

Fundamental to this vision will be the establishment of a "New College Charter." This idea was included in the report of the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board, recommended in March 1999, and since that time, there has been much debate and discussion on what the Charter might be. The Task Force was able to benefit from this work and has developed a vision, framework and transition plan for the successful introduction of the "New College Charter."

The Task Force will examine options for shared services, finding "best of class" examples of service provision and looking for administrative applications elsewhere in the postsecondary education system, concentrating on issues of common service delivery and good administrative practices (e.g., information technology, procurement and data collection).

Future pressures on postsecondary education will demand collaborative solutions and system-wide application. All institutions will need to broaden and deepen their understanding of collaboration and accelerate their activities. Through proposals, research and discussion the Task Force identified opportunities for system-wide collaboration that would benefit students directly, and provide cost savings or cost avoidance. These collaborative initiatives will ensure that the most effective administrative and service practices are in place to support the growth as we look into the 21st century.

We believe that working collaboratively in developing benchmarking of cost effective practices and sharing that information will benefit the system as a whole and allow for comparison with the best in the world.

The Task Force will recommend ways to ensure a continuing focus on best practices and their implementation so that current and future spending is directed to meeting the changing needs of students.

There already exists a strong record of success in collaborative initiatives by Ontario postsecondary institutions. However, it was clearly stated by all stakeholders that we should not consider more of the same, but rather should look for initiatives that will result in transformations to targeted operations.

Studies commissioned and proposals received by the Task Force indicate potential savings through collaboration in the range of $74 – $88 million. If there are targeted incentives, many of the future pressures facing postsecondary education will require these collaborative solutions—meeting student expectations, building the technology platforms for the future, increasing efficiencies, investing in system-wide infrastructure for system-wide needs and supporting communities.

To achieve these solutions, a mechanism must be established to share information and knowledge on best practices and encourage the adoption of successful innovation.

Additionally, investment is needed today to ensure that we can meet these pressures of the future. Through the *Transformation Incentive Fund*, choices can be made about the direction and the pace of change to benefit students.

The Task Force will seek the views of students, postsecondary institutions, faculty and staff associations, local communities, business groups, and other organizations as appropriate to ensure a broad, system level perspective is obtained.

In an effort to obtain the greatest amount of input in the short time available to the Task Force, we pursued several "tracks" at the same time—research, proposals and submissions, Roundtable discussions, and a student survey. The Task Force set up a Web site, so that information would be available and anyone could e-mail comments. In addition, the Task Force members and staff met with stakeholders throughout the period of the project.

As well, throughout the project the Task Force strove to ensure the voices of Ontario students were solicited and heard. There were meetings with student associations, student-centred Roundtable discussions, student participants at Roundtable discussions and a student survey that reached out to 800 students across the province. The survey, "*Student Experiences and Priorities: A Survey of Ontario Colleges and Universities*" is contained in the *Resource Document*, a supporting document to the Report of the Task Force

The Task Force will solicit proposals from institutions on ways to increase administrative efficiencies through shared services, administrative collaborations, or other activities, while maintaining access and ensuring affordability and accountability. The Task Force may also provide advice to the Minister as appropriate.

The Task Force will ensure proposals are accompanied by a strong business case and will develop criteria for such business cases.

An Invitation for Proposals was sent to student organizations, faculty, employees, employers, institutions and community organizations, requesting proposals that would provide direction and momentum for system-wide change that would benefit students. The Task Force encouraged collaboration, resourcefulness and practical solutions. Given the very short period of time to respond, only essential information was requested.

The Task Force did not have a fund of money to allocate; however, we conducted a review of the proposals against the priorities, objectives and criteria that we developed for a Transformation Incentive Fund. Based on that review, there are some proposals that we believe serve as an example of the kind of change and action needed to achieve the results expected. They demonstrate commitment to innovation and excellence for students. They deserve full consideration and support.

Summary of Recommendations

Meeting The Needs Of Students

Navigating the Portals and Pathways: *Creating a Seamless System*

RECOMMENDATION: ONE-STOP ENTRY PORTAL

1. **Develop a one-stop entry portal that guides students to effective decision making about their postsecondary education.**

This program should be a system-wide collaboration within the sector and should provide:

- decision-making tools to assist in sorting out the vast amount of information
- services through a range of mediums (on-line, interactive, in-person, and print)
- pre-preparation programs

The Ontario College Application Services and the Ontario Universities Application Centre should partner to provide the information and decision-making tools necessary for one-stop shopping research for students and families.

It is important that such tools and services be available to Franco-Ontarian students and involve French language institutions. It is important that such services be in place prior to 2003 to respond to the increased demands of the double cohort and demographic growth.

RECOMMENDATION: IMPROVED STUDENT SERVICE

2. **Make strategic investments in initiatives that improve student services in key areas of counselling, on-campus services, library services and services for special needs students.**

These investments should:

- involve students in their design and development
- be collaborative with other institutions and/or the community
- have the potential for application in other institutions

RECOMMENDATION: A SEAMLESS TRANSFER SYSTEM FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

3. **Assess and evaluate the existing mechanisms for transfer to determine how to move forward in the direction of ensuring available strategic skills, supporting the mobility of learners and preparing for e-learning and to identify the key elements of a framework for action.**

4. **Determine the necessary steps to implement this framework for action by 2003, set objectives for progress and monitor the achievement of those objectives.**

5. **Create a single, seamless, system-wide transfer system for the postsecondary sector that is comprehensible to students and institutions.**

   This should be developed collaboratively with government and institutions. This transfer system should be developed and managed by the College-University Consortium Council with a strong mandate to facilitate transfers.

RECOMMENDATION: STUDENT SERVICE COMMITMENT

6. **Each postsecondary institution should adopt a Student Service Commitment based on the following student guarantees:**

   - clear and accurate information about courses and entry requirements
   - efficient and fair handling of applications
   - prompt and efficient handling of applications for financial assistance and payment at the beginning of the first term
   - well-informed guidance from tutors and career staff and ready access to counsellors
   - accessible information about how well colleges and universities are performing, what services are available on-site, what facilities are provided for students with disabilities, and how courses will be taught and assessed
   - the opportunity for students to register their views

Accessible and Affordable Education: Easing the Financial Burden for Students

RECOMMENDATION: SIMPLIFY, COORDINATE AND HARMONIZE

7. **Simplify and coordinate student financial assistance policies, including needs assessment and eligibility criteria, by harmonizing the Canada Student Loans and the Ontario Student Loans Programs.**

RECOMMENDATION: LINK ONE-STOP ENTRY PORTAL WITH STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

8. **Evolve a partnership of college and university application centres and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to provide a single window of information for students, parents and counsellors about student financial assistance and postsecondary education in Ontario. Access through the single window would be done via multiple channels of communication such as on-line Internet access, print media, and telephone. There would be an interactive capacity for using planning and decision-making tools.**

RECOMMENDATION: TIMELY APPLICATIONS AND PAYMENT

9. Continue to improve OSAP on-line application processing, tracking application status, sharing information with students and institutions, and speeding up the process through electronic transmittal of documentation. The Ministry, institutions and banks should partner to make application and fund transfer seamless and efficient for students.

RECOMMENDATION: ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

10. Develop an "Invest in Students" culture to make information, guidance and planning for postsecondary education accessible to students and families.

Initiate and provide incentives to create a public-private partnership for building an "Invest in Students" culture featuring early planning, expert counselling and financial aid decision-making tools, and information for students, families and counsellors. Involve partners from student, alumni, parent and guidance groups, education and financial institutions.

Encourage early financial planning for postsecondary education by students and families beginning in elementary school. Build on the new curriculum requirements for an Annual Education Plan involving and empowering students and their families.

RECOMMENDATION: MEASURE AND REPORT ON ACCESS

11. As part of their annual public reports, postsecondary institutions should be required to report on accessibility and to track participation of their students, including those with socio-economic disadvantages.

The method of measuring access and tracking participation should be developed by the Council of Ontario Universities, the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities and student organizations.

RECOMMENDATION: MORE ACCESSIBLE SCHOLARSHIP/AID ASSISTANCE

12. Improve scholarship assistance to make it more accessible to both college and university students:

The Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation should allow first year students to qualify for the national Canada Millennium Bursary.

The Ontario government should ensure that both college- and university-bound students have equal access to the Aiming for the Top Scholarships.

Review funding and OSAP policies related to access to computer technology and distance education such as the eligibility of student computer expenses.

RECOMMENDATION: POLICIES TO REDUCE STUDENT DEBT LOAD

13. Continue strong focus on governmental and institutional policies to reduce student debt load and defaults. Encourage policies and practices to retain "at risk" qualified students to complete their postsecondary education.

Partner with lending institutions to create an easily accessed system-wide portal that assists students with understanding and managing their debt loads before they leave the institution.

Conduct institutional exit interviews with students and provide students with information on all the avenues to support their financial obligations, including their debt.

Improve students' access to trained counselling resources and the full use of financial assistance through tuition set-aside, emergency funds, the Ontario Student Opportunity Grant and other forms of loan forgiveness, in order to help institutions support and retain students.

Opportunities for E-learning: *24/7 Solutions*

RECOMMENDATION: STRATEGIC INVESTMENT IN E-LEARNING

14. The government should support strategic investments in the major infrastructure requirements for e-learning/distributed learning

15. The government should support and promote collaboration in the development and delivery of e-learning.

Challenges Facing Institutions

Mandates and Missions: *Still Evolving*

RECOMMENDATION: EXPAND THE VISION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

16. The government should recognize the differentiated missions for postsecondary institutions in contributing to the greater participation of regions and special populations in economic, social and community development.

This vision must offer concrete plans, not general strategies, and focus on planning, outcomes and measurable results.

RECOMMENDATION: ENABLE DIFFERENTIATION

17. Consider the polytechnic model and potential "host" institutions to expand postsecondary education choices in Ontario, and establish this model within the new college charter framework.

18. Eliminate the government defined geographic catchment areas for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. Colleges should be given the flexibility and latitude to strike collaborative arrangements anywhere in the province, in the country or in the world.

The colleges' current limited geographic catchment areas do not match the movements of today's highly mobile student, nor do these outdated borders recognize the colleges' broader regional economic development role as specialized centres of excellence with national and international demand.

RECOMMENDATION: ENCOURAGE COMPLEMENTARY MISSIONS THROUGH COLLABORATION

19. Align incentives for postsecondary education with efforts on the part of institutions to adopt collaborative arrangements in recognition that collaboration is even more vital and urgent for francophone, rural and northern institutions.

This will likely mean funding recognition of the different mandates of northern, francophone and rural postsecondary institutions in a manner that is different from current means, to serve their communities.

Encourage northern postsecondary education institutions and their community partners to build on their "*Together for the North 2000-2010*" plan by maximizing the use of existing resources and infrastructure, attracting and retaining students, and developing complementary programs to eliminate or minimize unnecessary duplication.

Appoint a special advisor for francophone and northern collaboration empowered to facilitate collaborative arrangements and make recommendations on changes in funding or other arrangements to ensure viable northern, francophone and rural institutions.

RECOMMENDATION: ENSURE ACCESS

20. Provide targeted funding to permit special populations—aboriginals and francophones, for instance, to have full access to educational opportunities.

Both federal and provincial governments should recognize the higher cost per student required to support postsecondary access and affordability among those communities.

21. Continue and reinforce the access and remediation role of colleges to accommodate special populations in urban and rural areas and economically disadvantaged regions.

A New College Charter: The Pathway to the Future

RECOMMENDATION: A NEW COLLEGE CHARTER

22. **A new college charter should be developed and based on the governance model and administrative practices of a not-for-profit corporation operating under a common legislative framework.**

RECOMMENDATION: TRANSITION PLAN TO THE NEW COLLEGE CHARTER

23. **A careful plan for transition should be developed that sets out the framework for the new college charter in legislation, regulation and policy.**

The governance models and administrative practices will be set out in this framework. This transition plan, as proposed by the Task Force, is designed to move the college sector to successful implementation of the new charter and the new vision.

The transition is time limited and should be facilitated by the Ministry with the support of expert resources. Colleges should have available to them both the financial and expert resources to assist them in evaluating their progress in transition and in taking the necessary steps to become the new entity.

24. **Eliminate the Council of Regents**

With the establishment of a common legislative framework that sets out the role and responsibility of independent and accountable boards of governors and the successful implementation of the transition plan, the role historically provided by the Council of Regents is no longer needed.

Accountability and Reporting: *Cutting through the Clutter*

RECOMMENDATION: A SINGLE ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

25. **Establish an accountability framework that is based on a public vision and set of goals for postsecondary education in Ontario.**

This framework would have a foundation common to both colleges and universities. The key elements of this framework would be an established institutional mission, processes for effective governance including a role for student governors, annual public reporting, tracking and monitoring performance indicators and the assurance of continuing best practice using benchmark information.

26. **Replace many existing reporting requirements with an annual report produced by each institution and issued to the public and the government.**

Colleges and universities would produce public reports that should include:

- the institution's mission, key strategies and accomplishments
- progress toward goals defined by performance indicators

- performance for institution goals as well as system-wide goals
- participation rates and access for students
- audited financial statements
- other reports that may be required by the government

RECOMMENDATION: CUTTING RED TAPE

27. Consolidate reporting and build on existing information where possible.

The time has also come to review all reporting requirements and eliminate those that are not required, and streamline or consolidate others.

Reporting should be based on a common source of financial and management information so that institutions can develop an annual report that includes audited financial statements and incorporates strategic reporting requirements.

Create a common source of financial and management information in order to build the information for annual reports, performance indicators and comparative benchmarks.

RECOMMENDATION: MEANINGFUL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

28. Develop a common set of performance indicators and benchmarks of best practice to provide reliable information and a consistent set of measures on the performance of the higher education sector.

These performance indicators, developed in cooperation between the government and institutions, would support the public vision, goals and objectives for postsecondary education in Ontario. Some of the performance indicators would provide information on the system as a whole and as such can be used in both the college and university sector.

Effective benchmarks should be clearly matched to expected outcomes and provide for comparison not only with postsecondary institutions within Ontario and Canada, but also with the best institutions in the world.

A working group of representatives from Council of Ontario Universities, Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities should develop these performance indicators and benchmarks.

29. Establish Financial Health Indicators for use in Ontario institutions

These indicators would be developed in collaboration between the government, the institutions and experts in accounting. Such indicators can be used by individual institutions as well as system-wide. These indicators would provide information on the system as a whole and as such can be used in both the college and university sector. Although there will be recognition of the characteristics of Ontario postsecondary education, these indicators will enable international comparison.

Jump-Starting Transformation

The Next Wave of Collaboration: Building on the Successes of the Past

RECOMMENDATION: ACCELERATE COLLABORATION IN THE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SECTOR

30. Encourage institutions to build on previous efforts and pursue investments in collaboration that have potential system-wide applicability.

Initiatives for collaboration will result in:

- Improved services for students
- Better use of existing resources and/or facilities
- Better use of scarce and specialized resources
- Increased efficiencies
- Development and implementation of compatible infrastructure
- Sustainable over the long term
- Further cost containment

RECOMMENDATION: SHARING INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE ON BEST PRACTICES

31. Establish a structure and mechanism for sharing the information and knowledge on best practices across the postsecondary sector.

Initially, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will take a leadership role in the development of a mechanism that will continue with the sharing of information about best practices begun by the Investing in Students Task Force. Working with the Council of Ontario Universities, Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario, the Ministry will look to permanently establish this mechanism, possibly with the Quality Assessment Board.

Incentives for Change: *Adopting Best Practices*

RECOMMENDATION: ESTABLISH A "TRANSFORMATION INCENTIVE FUND"

32. Establish an incentive fund with a goal to foster innovation and the adoption of best practices. This Fund will operate for a five-year period. The Task Force recommends that $80 million per year be allocated to this Fund.

The priority areas for the fund would be:

Student-Centred Services

- Application and transfer services
- Student support services
- Access and support for e-learning;

Institutional Improvements

- Use of physical plant
- Cost effective administration

Sector Wide Improvement Strategies

- Accountability and decision support
- Mandate transition toward a New College Charter.

Initiatives under this Fund would meet the following objectives:

- Demonstrate a focus on quality services for students
- Support access to higher education for willing and qualified people within Ontario
- Improve efficiencies and effectiveness
- Enhance the global competitiveness of Ontario's postsecondary sector
- Proactively promote collaboration within the postsecondary sector
- Promote collaboration between postsecondary sector that involves 'other' partners, such as school boards, municipalities, hospitals, private sector, not-for-profit sector
- Institution based initiatives that demonstrate that this innovation could 'spark' other initiatives and can increase the pace and quality of change
- Provide for future cost avoidance

The success of the incentive fund will be ensured by the institutions and their associations, since they will be required to meet a number of pre-conditions prior to approval of funds:

- Initiative proposed must be clearly tied to one or more of the fund's policy objectives
- Proposals must clearly demonstrate how the outcomes will be measured and reported
- Proposals must clearly demonstrate how lessons learned in design and implementation will be shared and communicated across the postsecondary sector

- Proposals will provide the performance measures for administrative effectiveness and efficiency and indicate how these measures will be collected, reported on and used on an ongoing basis
- Institutions will be accountable to report on outcomes to the public and the government in their annual report

33. Establish an advisory panel to review funding proposals and provide advice to government. The Panel will be in place for the five years of the fund. Membership on the panel will comprise Minister-appointed representatives from institutions, students, business and community organizations.

The government will set the criteria to be used in the review of proposals in accordance with the fund policy objectives. The criteria can include:

- Meeting the policy objectives
- Ensuring that all the pre-conditions to receive funds are in place (e.g., the institutions and their associations have the management systems in place to report on measures, performance and outcomes)
- A solid business case is provided in the proposal
- The commitment of the institutions to the initiative is apparent

The Advisory Panel will apply the criteria to the proposal submissions and will recommend proposals for funding to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The final decision to fund proposals will rest with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Ministry will be responsible for administering the fund in terms of management and reporting.

Appendix A – Summary of Financial and Enrolment Data

Summary of Financial and Enrolment Data

Table 1: Full Time *Equivalent Enrolment in Ontario's Colleges and Universities*
1990/91 to 1999/00

1990/91	257,823	132,727	390,550
1991/92	268,298	149,226	417,524
1992/93	272,691	158,406	431,097
1993/94	269,980	161,541	431,521
1994/95	264,830	163,975	428,805
1995/96	263,716	168,412	432,128
1996/97	258,417	166,194	424,611
1997/98	258,298	168,552	426,850
1998/99	260,535	169,338	429,873
1999/00	267,888	168,977	436,865

Source: MTCU

Table 2: University Expendable Operating Revenues, 1990/91 – 1999/00 [1]
(current dollars)

	1990/91	1999/00	Change 90/91 to 99/00	% Change 90/91 to 99/00
Ontario Operating Grants and Contracts	$1,846.75	$1,643.63	-$203.12	-11.0%
Tuition, Incidental and Miscellaneous Fees [2]	$507.21	$1,283.43	$776.22	153.0%
Donations, Investment, Miscellaneous and other income	$87.67	$134.83	$47.16	53.8%
Total Universities	$2,441.63	$3,061.89	$620.26	25.4%
University FTE Enrolment *	257,823	267,888	10,065	3.9%
Revenue per FTE	$9,470	$11,430	$1,960	20.7%
Operating Grants per FTE	$7,163	$6,136	-1,027.33	-14.3%

1. Source: COFO-UO, 1999-2000 estimated
2. Includes revenues from tuition fee set aside which are only expendable on student aid

* Source: MTCU. Includes all full-time equivalent graduates and undergraduates enrolled during the fiscal year.

Table 3: University Expendable Operating Revenues, 1990/91 – 1999/00 [1]
(constant dollars - Ontario Consumer Price Index, 2000=100)

	1990/91	1999/00	Change 90/91 to 99/00	% Change 90/91 to 99/00
Ontario Operating Grants and Contracts	$2,272.61	$1,675.32	-$597.28	-26.3%
Tuition, Incidental and Miscellaneous Fees [2]	$624.17	$1,305.76	$681.59	109.2%
Donations, Investment, Miscellaneous and other income	$107.88	$137.43	$29.55	27.4%
Total Universities	$3,004.65	$3,118.51	$113.86	3.8%
University FTE Enrolment *	257,823	267,888	10,065	3.9%
Revenue per FTE	$11,654	$11,641	-$12.81	-0.1%
Operating Grants per FTE	$8,815	$6,254	-$2,560.76	-29.1%

1. Source: COFO-UO, 1999-2000 estimated
2. Includes revenues from tuition fee set aside which are only expendable on student aid

* Source: MTCU. Includes all full-time equivalent graduate and undergraduate students enrolled during the fiscal year.

Table 4: Expenditures by Administrative Function: Universities
1990/91 – 1998/99
(current and constant dollars - Ontario Consumer Price Index, 2000=100)

	1990-91		1998-99		Percentage Change, 90/91 vs. 98/99	
	Actual	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***
Total Administrative Expenditures	$1,235.0m	$1,449.1m	$1,504.3m	$1,533.3m	21.8%	5.8%
Expenditures Per FTE	$4,789.99	$5,620.39	$5,773.79	$5,885.13	20.5%	4.7%
[illegible]						
	Actual	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***
Total Expenditures	$164.0m	$192.4m	$194.2m	$197.9m	18.4%	2.9%
Expenditures Per FTE	$636.06	$746.33	$745.36	$759.73	17.2%	1.8%
[illegible]						
	Actual	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***
Total Expenditures	$70.3m	$82.5m	$109.0m	$111.1m	55.0%	34.7%
Expenditures Per FTE	$272.66	$319.92	$418.32	$426.38	53.4%	33.3%
[illegible]						
	Actual	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***
Total Expenditures	$270.3m	$317.1m	$292.4m	$298.1m	8.2%	-6.0%
Expenditures Per FTE	$1,048.32	$1,290.36	$1,122.45	$1,144.09	7.1%	-11.3%
[illegible]						
	Actual	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***
Total Expenditures	$332.5m	$390.1m	$431.0m	$439.3m	29.6%	12.6%
Expenditures Per FTE	$1,289.64	$1,513.22	$1,654.38	$1,686.28	28.3%	11.4%
[illegible]						
	Actual	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***	***Actual***	***Constant***
Total Expenditures	$397.9m	$466.9m	$477.6m	$486.8m	20.0%	4.3%
Expenditures Per FTE	$1,543.31	$1,810.87	$1,833.29	$1,868.65	18.8%	3.2%

[1] Source: *Financial Report of Ontario Universities* prepared by the Council of Ontario Universities, data on Functional Areas by Object of Expense for both operating and ancillary expendable funds. All costs associated with the Instruction and Research Function Area and expenditures on Scholarships and Bursaries found under the Student Services Functional area have been excluded. Expenditures on non-credit instruction were excluded. Excludes internal cost reallocations.

[2] These areas were consolidated for comparability.

Table 5: College Operating Revenues [1]
1990/91 – 1999/00
(current dollars)

	1990/91	1999/00	Change 90/91 to 99/00	(%) Change 90/91to 99/00
College Operating Grants	$771.7	$692.7	-$79	-10.2%
Tuition and Ancillary Fees [2]	$155.7	$422.2	$266.5	171.2%
Other government grants	$300.2	$147.7	-$152.5	-50.8%
Contract Training	$61.6	$99.2	$37.6	61.0%
Other Income	$58.7	$85.6	$26.9	45.8%
Total colleges	$1,347.9	$1,447.4	$99.5	7.4%
College Revenues ($b) [3]	$1.2863b	$1.3482b	$61.9m	4.8%
College FTE enrolment *	132,727	168,977	36,250	27.3%
Revenue per FTE	$9,691	$7,978	-$1,713	-17.7%
Operating Grants per FTE	$5,814	$4,099	-$1,715	-29.5%

1. 1999/00 estimated
2. Includes revenues from tuition fee set aside which are only expendable on student aid
3. Calculations exclude ancillary operations' revenue and contract training.

* Includes all full-time postsecondary, tuition short and part-time postsecondary.

Table 6: College Operating Revenues [1]
1990/91 – 1999/00
(constant dollars - Ontario Consumer Price Index, 2000=100)

Table 6 Current Dollars	1990/91	1999/00	Change 90/91 to 99/00	(%) Change 90/91to 99/00
College Operating Grants	$949.7	$706.1	-$243.6	-25.7%
Tuition and Ancillary Fees [2]	$191.6	$430.3	$248.7	124.6%
Other government grants	$369.4	$150.5	-$218.9	-59.3%
Contract Training	$75.8	$101.1	$25.3	33.4%
Other Income	$72.2	$87.3	$15.1	20.9%
Total colleges	$1,658.7	$1,475.3	-$183.4	-11.1%
College Revenues ($b) [3]	$1.5829b	$1.374.2b	-$183.4m	-13.2%
College FTE enrolment *	132,727	168,977	36,250	27.3%
Revenue per FTE	$11,926	$8,132	-$3,766	-31.8%
Operating Grants per FTE	$7,155	$4,179	-$2,976	-41.6%

1. 1999/00 estimated
2. Includes revenues from tuition fee set aside which are only expendable on student aid
3. Calculations exclude ancillary operations' revenue and contract training.

* Includes all full-time postsecondary, tuition short and part-time postsecondary.

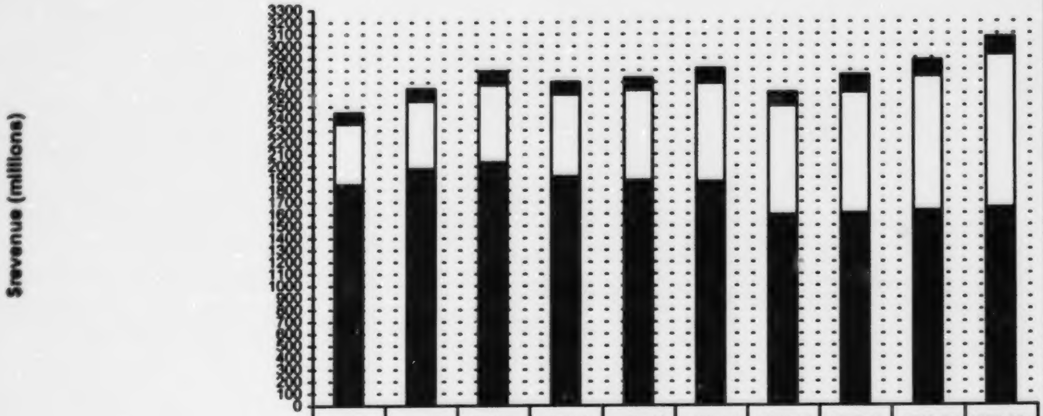
Table 7: Administrative Expenditures by Function: Colleges
1990/91 – 1998/99
(current and constant dollars - Ontario Consumer Price Index, 2000=100)

	1990-91		1998-99		Percentage Change 90-91 vs. 98-99	
	Actual	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*
Total Administrative Expenditures	$456.5m	$535.6m	$545.2m	$555.7m	19.4%	3.8%
Expenditures Per FTE	$3,439.40	$4,035.66	$3,219.73	$3,281.82	-6.4%	-18.7%
	Actual	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*
Total Expenditures	$117.1m	$134.4m	$145.0m	$147.8m	23.8%	7.5%
Expenditures Per FTE	$882.39	$1,035.36	$856.05	$872.56	-3.0%	-15.7%
	Actual	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*
Total Expenditures	$124.1m	$145.7m	$125.1m	$127.5m	0.8%	-12.4%
Expenditures Per FTE	$935.36	$1,097.52	$738.92	$753.17	-21%	-34.0%
	Actual	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*
Total Expenditures	$122.5m	$143.8m	$125.3m	$127.7m	2.3%	-11.2%
Expenditures Per FTE	$923.17	$1,083.21	$739.87	$754.14	-19.9%	-30.4%
	Actual	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*	*Actual*	*Constant*
Total Expenditures	$92.7m	$108.8m	$149.8m	$152.7m	61.6%	40.4%
Expenditures Per FTE	$698.48	$819.57	$884.89	$901.96	26.7%	10.1%

Source: CFIS, 1999-2000 estimated, Constant Dollars: Ontario CPI, Statistics Canada, MOF estimates
Note: Does not include expenditures for: Student Assistance, Scholarships, Bursaries, and Awards; Job Connect

Chart 1 - University Expendable Operating Revenues 1990-91 to 1999-00

(excluding non-credit instruction)



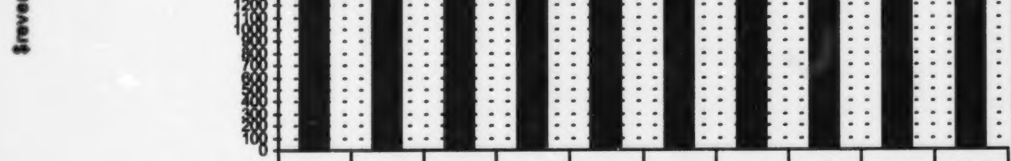
	1990-91 (2441.6)	1991-92 (2645.8)	1992-93 (2783.4)	1993-94 (2705.4)	1994-95 (2734.1)	1995-96 (2809.7)	1996-97 (2614.4)	1997-98 (2754.2)	1998-99 (2877.5)	1999-00e (3061.9)
■ Donations, Investment, Misc and Other Income	87.7	96.1	106.5	100.3	105.6	120.9	113.5	140.0	132.2	134.8
□ Tuition, Incidental & Misc Fees	507.2	571.7	641.3	696.0	752.1	817.5	907.6	1010.6	1124.3	1283.4
■ Ontario Grants/Contracts	1846.7	1978.0	2035.7	1909.1	1876.5	1871.3	1593.3	1603.6	1620.9	1643.6

Data Source: COFO-OU, 1998-99 restated for comparability to previous years, 1999-00 estimated

Chart 2 - University Expendable Operating Revenues in Constant 2000 Dollars

(excluding non-credit instruction)

1990-91 to 1999-00

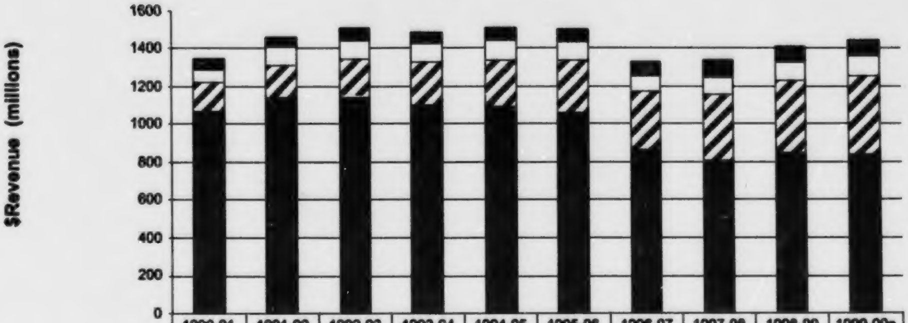


	1990-91 (3004.7)	1991-92 (3104.4)	1992-93 (3120.8)	1993-94 (3002.9)	1994-95 (2981.2)	1995-96 (3063.6)	1996-97 (2782.3)	1997-98 (2882.5)	1998-99 (2956.6)	1999-00e (3118.5)
■ Donations, Investment, Misc and Other Income	107.9	112.7	119.4	111.4	115.1	131.8	120.7	146.8	136.0	137.4
□ Tuition, Incidental & Misc Fees	624.2	670.8	719.0	772.5	820.1	891.3	965.9	1054.9	1153.1	1305.8
■ Ontario Grants/Contracts	2272.6	2320.9	2282.4	2119.1	2046.1	2040.4	1695.7	1680.9	1667.5	1675.3

Data Source: COFO-OU, 1998-99 restated for comparability to previous years, 1999-00 estimated
Constant Dollars: Ontario CPI, Statistics Canada, MOF estimates

Chart 3 - College Actual Operating Revenues 1990-91 through 1999-00

(Including Contract Training, Excluding Ancillary)



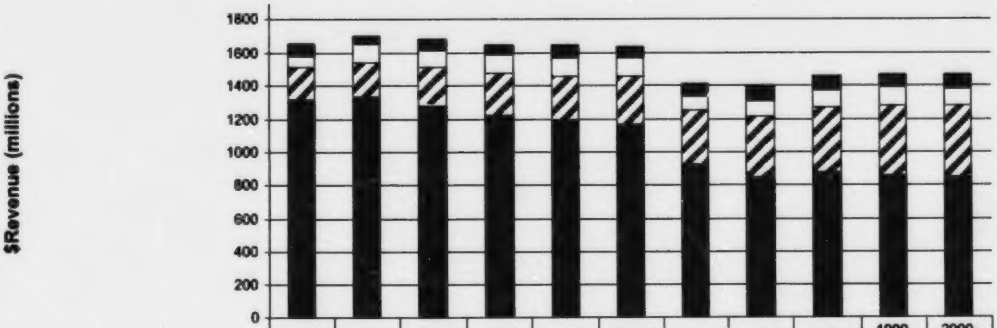
	1990-91 (1347.9)	1991-92 (1456)	1992-93 (1505)	1993-94 (1488.1)	1994-95 (1513.8)	1995-96 (1503.4)	1996-97 (1330.4)	1997-98 (1342.3)	1998-99 (1418.7)	1999-00e (1447.4)
■ Other Income	58.7	43.7	63.1	55.8	67.0	63.3	67.4	92.7	85.6	85.6
☐ Contract Training	61.6	94.7	94.4	102.3	107.2	98.8	84.4	89.0	99.2	99.2
▨ Tuition, Incidental & Misc Fees	155.7	178.1	208.7	231.3	245.0	275.2	309.3	347.6	387.4	422.2
■ Other Govt. Grants	300.2	319.4	298.2	277.7	296.7	263.9	178.0	140.2	147.7	147.7
■ Operating Grants	771.7	820.1	840.6	821.0	797.9	802.2	691.3	672.8	696.8	692.7

Data Source: CFIS, 1999-00 estimated

Chart 4 - College Operating Revenues in Constant 2000 Dollars

(Including Contract Training, Excluding Ancillary)

1990-91 through 1999-00



	1990-91 (1658.7)	1991-92 (1708.4)	1992-93 (1687.4)	1993-94 (1651.8)	1994-95 (1650.6)	1995-96 (1639.2)	1996-97 (1415.9)	1997-98 (1407)	1998-99 (1459.5)	1999-00e (1475.3)	2000-01e (1468.3)
■ Other Income	72.2	51.3	70.7	61.9	73.1	69.0	71.7	97.2	88.1	87.3	85.6
☐ Contract Training	75.8	111.1	105.8	113.6	116.9	107.7	89.8	93.3	102.1	101.1	99.2
▨ Tuition, Incidental and Other Fees	191.6	209.0	234.0	256.7	267.1	300.1	329.2	364.3	398.5	430.3	430.6
■ Other Govt. Grants	369.4	374.8	334.3	308.3	323.5	287.7	189.4	147.0	151.9	150.5	147.7
■ Operating Grants	949.7	962.3	942.5	911.3	870.0	874.7	735.7	705.2	718.9	706.1	705.2

Data Source: CFIS, 1999-00 estimated
Constant Dollars: Ontario CPI, Statistics Canada, MOF estimates

Chart 5

Percentage Analysis of General Operating Expenses by Function *

	Instruction & Research	Non-Credit Instruction	Library	Computing	Admin. & General	Physical Plant	Student Services	Total **
Newfoundland	68.3	0.9	6.2	5.3	6.6	8.3	4.5	100.0
PEI	65.6	0.0	5.3	2.1	8.9	13.8	4.3	100.0
Nova Scotia	59.1	2.5	5.4	4.3	11.0	11.7	5.9	100.0
New Brunswick	61.2	1.6	6.5	4.4	10.2	12.0	4.0	100.0
Quebec	64.8	1.4	5.6	3.7	10.8	11.1	2.7	100.0
Ontario	61.8	2.9	6.6	3.7	7.0	10.3	7.6	100.0
Manitoba	57.4	3.5	6.2	3.9	7.2	18.4	3.3	100.0
Saskatchewan	62.9	2.2	6.7	2.6	10.1	11.6	3.9	100/0
Alberta	58.8	2.8	6.3	5.6	9.5	12.9	4.3	100.0
British Columbia	58.8	6.1	6.1	2.0	12.3	9.3	5.5	100.0
Canada	61.7	2.8	6.2	3.7	9.1	11.1	5.4	100.0
9 Provinces	61.6	2.8	5.9	3.7	10.4	11.5	4.0	100.0

* Expenses are in thousands of dollars.

** Including non-credit instruction

Source: CAUBO data for 1998-99

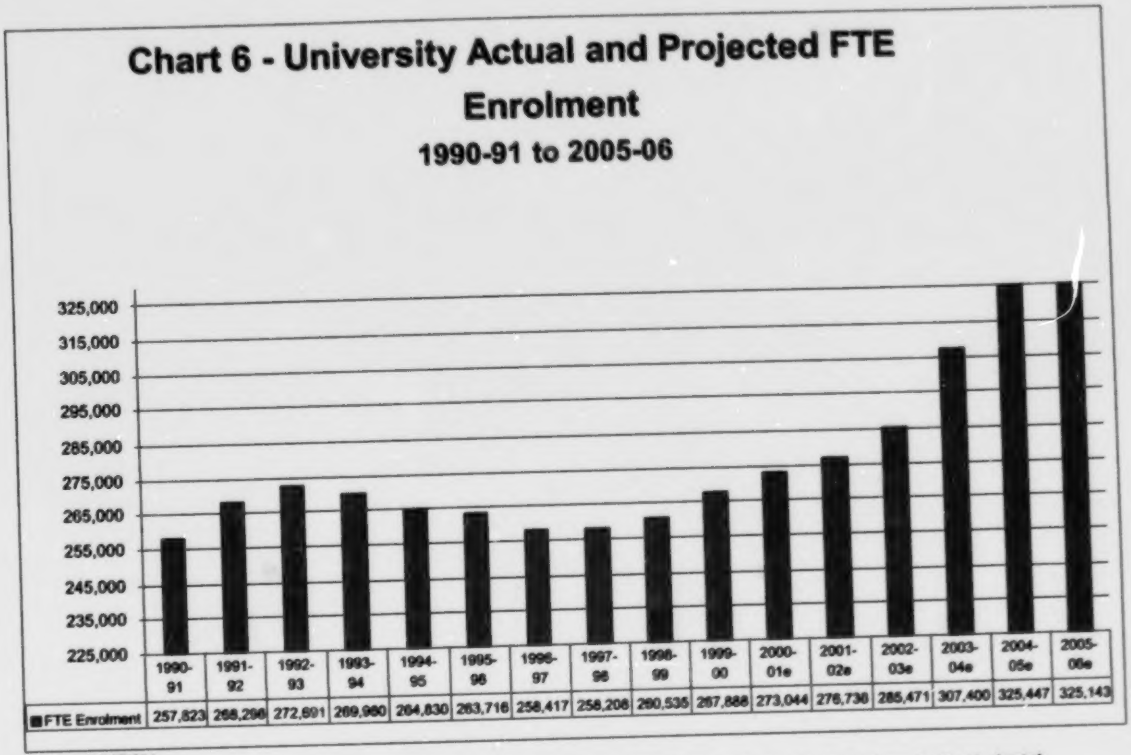


Chart 6 - University Actual and Projected FTE Enrolment

1990-91 to 2005-06

	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01e	2001-02e	2002-03e	2003-04e	2004-05e	2005-06e
■ FTE Enrolment	257,823	268,296	272,691	269,980	264,830	263,716	258,417	258,208	260,535	267,888	273,044	276,738	285,471	307,400	325,447	325,143

Source: MTCU
2000-01 to 2005-06 increases based on full-time headcount enrolments (full-time undergraduate and graduate students)
Assumptions: part-time enrolment will remain constant; full-time enrolment is equivalent to full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolment.

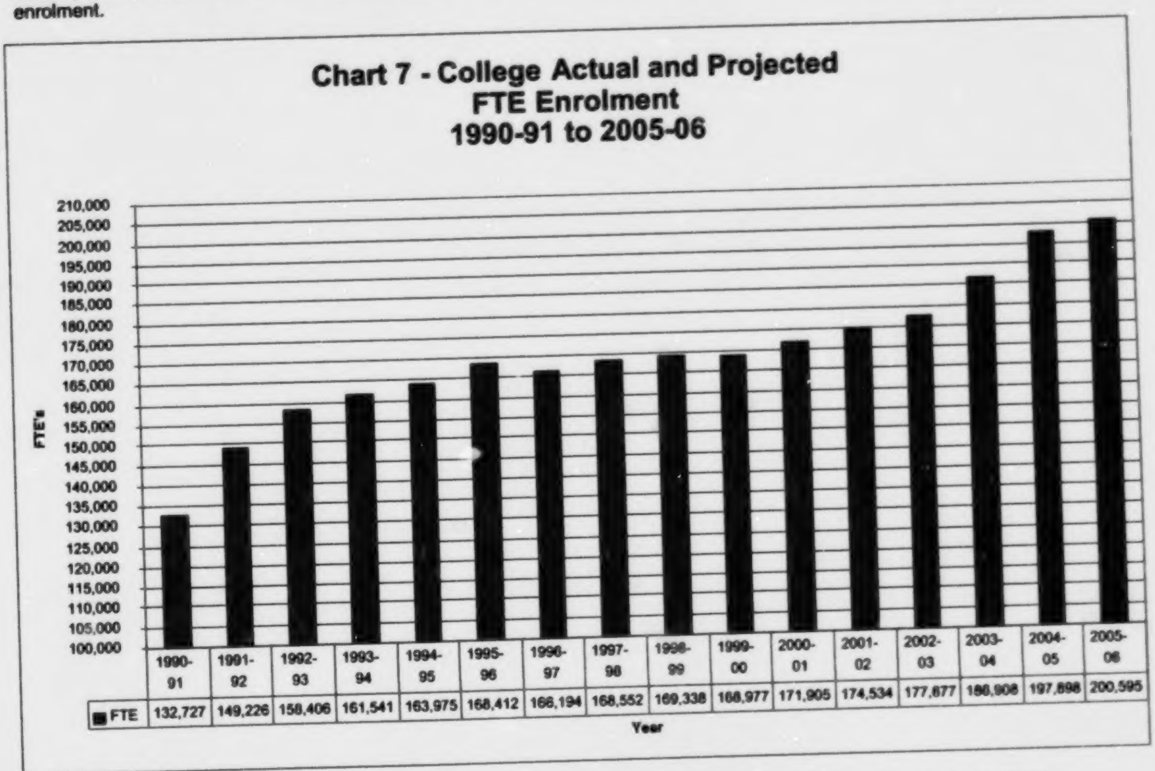


Chart 7 - College Actual and Projected FTE Enrolment

1990-91 to 2005-06

	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
■ FTE	132,727	149,226	158,406	161,541	163,975	168,412	166,194	168,552	169,338	168,977	171,905	174,534	177,677	186,908	197,898	200,595

Source: MTCU
2000-01 to 2005-06 increases based on full-time headcount enrolments (full-time undergraduate and graduate students)
Assumptions: part-time enrolment will remain constant; full-time enrolment is equivalent to full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolment.

Appendix B – Examples of Student Service Commitment

Higher Education Institution	HEI Responsibilities												Student Obligations		
	Prior to Entry			Registration/ Admission			To Current Students								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
Citizen's Agenda for Illinois Higher Education + (State of Illinois – Board of Education)	X		X				X					X			
Department of Education Charter for Higher Education, UK Govt.	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
University of Liverpool Student Charter (Senate & Council of University & Representative Council of the Guild of Students)	X	*		X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
University of Sheffield Student Charter (Officers of the University & Union of Students)	X	X*		X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X
University of Plymouth Student Charter (University & Student Union)	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
University of Dundee Student Charter # (University & Students' Association)	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
University of Strathclyde Student Charter @							X						X	X	X
University of Queensland (Australia) Student Charter	X			X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Colleges - Ontario (re: on 10 college documents)													X	X	X
Universities – Ontario (re: 11 university responses)~						~	~	~	X	X	X				X

+ Reference to: access; diversity; increase enrolment; improve productivity, cost effectiveness & accountability; focus partnerships/collaborations.

* Reference specifically to persons with disabilities / special services.

@ References explicitly the responsibilities of faculty to make lectures interesting.

Offers residence space to all single entrants.

~ All have codes on academic rights/behaviour dealing with provision of information, and appeals (not explicitly providing quality standards in education) Have Student Codes of Conduct for appropriate behaviour. Three have financial aid commitments. Four have statements on quality services to students.

Key

HEI Responsibilities Prior to Entry
A Information—academic
B Information—student services
C Information—financial aid

HEI Obligations Registration/ Admission
D Fair treatment
E Timely response
F Financial aid received

HEI Obligations to Students
G Academic—Quality Standards (teaching/ grading)
H Student Services—Quality Standards
I Student Representation Rights
J Equal & Confidential Treatment
K Complaints/Grievances/Appeals
L Transfers—rights to seamless transfer

Student Obligations
M Academic—quality standards
N Academic—attendance/ punctuality
O Behaviour—people, property, community

Appendix C – Transfer Arrangements in Other Jurisdictions

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">TRANSFER PROTOCOLS</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="4">COUNTRY PROTOCOLS</th></tr>
<tr><th>Scope & Purpose</th><th>Terms & Conditions</th><th>Management</th><th>Accountability</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">CANADA
Pan-Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of University Credits (1995)</td></tr>
<tr><td>▪ Canada-wide
▪ To promote transfers between institutions in Canada</td><td>Academic autonomy of HEIs is upheld</td><td></td><td>Protocol is recommended – it is not mandatory.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">EUROPEAN UNION
European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)</td></tr>
<tr><td>▪ All EU members
▪ To facilitate student transfers between HEIs in different countries & in the same country.
▪ Framework within which bilateral HEI arrangements are made
▪ Voluntary membership
▪ Model for individual countries – Belgium, Switzerland, Hungary</td><td>▪ Once a country joins it must abide by the rules.</td><td>▪ Mechanism within each HEI that monitors adherence to the principles and rules of the Agreement in each of its departments/faculties.</td><td>▪ Developed by the European Commission
▪ ECTS experts conduct site visits to ensure the ECTS is delivered consistently and in accordance to the established rules / processes.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">AUSTRALIA
National Technical & Further Education (TAFE) -University Credit Transfer Schemes
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)</td></tr>
<tr><td>▪ Country-wide - voluntary
▪ 20 universities participate in the scheme
▪ National credit arrangements for holders of TAFE qualifications in 13 broad fields of study.
▪ Local transfer arrangements between HEIs also exist</td><td>▪ Students must complete a TAFE diploma or certificate
▪ Student receives a minimum of 33% credit in related 3 yr. undergraduate program; 25% in a 4 yr. Program; 16.5% in nursing degree.
▪ Student must meet university requirements – including grades.</td><td>▪ Australian vice-chancellors' Committee (AVCC) oversees the scheme
▪ Participating HEIs handle the details internally for each student</td><td>▪ AVCC is the governing body
▪ Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is a comprehensive, nationally consistent framework for all HEIs that allows for credit transfer and articulations.</td></tr>
</table>

KEY: HEIs = Higher Education Institutions.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">TRANSFER PROTOCOLS</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="4">COUNTRY PROTOCOLS</th></tr>
<tr><th>Scope & Purpose</th><th>Terms & Conditions</th><th>Management</th><th>Accountability</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">NEW ZEALAND
Developing – National Qualifications Framework
Developing a virtual institution to facilitate credit transfer - NZUT (New Zealand University of Technology)</td></tr>
<tr><td>▪ National
▪ National register of qualifications
▪ Currently individual arrangements between HEIs</td><td></td><td>▪ Government policy for all qualifications to be registered by program/course level, outcome and field</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">ASIA & the PACIFIC
University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP) Credit Transfer Scheme (UCTS)</td></tr>
<tr><td>▪ Australia, Japan, China, Brunei, Korea, Philippines, Cambodia, Canada, Malaysia, Singapore, Chile, Mexico, Taiwan, Fiji, Mongolia, Thailand, Guam, Myanmar, USA, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa.
▪ Other countries can join with the approval of UMAP's governing authority.</td><td>▪ All accredited public and private HEIs can participate in the UMAP Exchange program.
▪ Adopted the 60 credit point scale for a full academic year
▪ Credit scale is a numerical measure of student workload</td><td>▪ Each participating HEI nominates a co-ordinator. Co-ordinator is responsible for overseeing UCTS applications, providing advice, being the contact point, completing and forwarding necessary UMAP forms.
▪ Co-ordinator usually located in HEI International Office.</td><td>▪ The International Secretariat – based in Tokyo University – monitors UCTS internationally.</td></tr>
</table>

KEY: HEIs = Higher Education Institutions.

PROVINCE / STATE TRANSFER POLICIES

Scope & Purpose	Terms & Conditions	Management	Accountability
ALBERTA The Alberta Transfer Guide			
▪ All HEIs province-wide ▪ To promote transfers between institutions ▪ The Guide is a record of all formal appointments. Includes a listing of course-to-course transfer equivalencies; details block transfer agreeements.	▪ HEIs maintain autonomy to admit students based on space availability / quality concerns	▪ Each HEI appoints a Contact (usually Registrar or Admissions Officer) responsible for transfers information, procedures and arrangements ▪ Proposals for credit must be formally processed using Alberta Council on Admissions & Transfer forms. If accepted the HEI informs other HEIs.	▪ Developed and managed by Alberta Council on Admissions & Transfer (ACAT) ▪ ACAT maintains transfer agreements database ▪ ACAT can act as arbiter if there is a dispute between HEIs. ACAT's decision is final.
BRITISH COLUMBIA B.C. Transfer Guide			
▪ Province-wide ▪ To facilitate seamless transfer and student mobility ▪ The Guide is a record of all formal transfer agreements. Includes a listing of course-to-course transfer equivalencies; details block transfer agreements.	▪ Seamless transfer between courses & programs listed in the Guide ▪ Each HEI retains autonomy regarding admissions based on availability of space / quality	▪ Over 65 articulation committees recognised by BC Council on Admissions & Transfers. Cover programs delivered by more than one HEI.	▪ BC Council on Admissions and Transfers oversees the scheme
CALIFORNIA California Articulation Number System (CANS)			
▪ 100 community colleges, 20 state universities, 4 private HEIs. ▪ 7,186 community college programs have been CANS approved	▪ A cross-referenced course identification system for lower division, transferable major preparation courses. ▪ Eliminates the necessity for each HEI to articulate agreements	▪ Each HEI signs Statement of Commitment to abide by courses included in CANS. ▪ Process of faculty review leading to articulation of courses for transfer is co-ordinated by each HEI's Articulation Officer.	▪ CANS Co-ordinating Council. ▪ Monitors CANS, formulates policies, forum for information exchange and discussion. ▪ Representatives from colleges, universities, UC and private HEIs sit on Council

KEY: HEIs = Higher Education Institutions.

PROVINCE / STATE TRANSFER POLICIES

Scope & Purpose	Terms & Conditions	Management	Accountability
MICHIGAN Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers (MACRAO) Transfer Agreement			
▪ State wide ▪ Voluntary membership – not all HEIs participate	▪ 30 semester credit hours of compatible 100 level + course work granted seamless transfer to participating HEIs ▪ Students with completed Assoc. Degrees satisfy the 2 yr. requirements for a 4 yr. HEI.	▪ Administered by Registration and Admissions Offices.	▪ MACRAO is a voluntary association. ▪ Registrars and Admissions Officers monitor transfer Agreement.
OHIO Ohio Articulation & Transfer policy			
▪ State-wide ▪ Applies to all undergraduate course credits ▪ Based on transfer module – common blocks of knowledge as opposed to course by course transfer.	▪ HEI autonomy to admit students based on space availability / quality ▪ Encourages students to complete "units' or 'blocks' of courses, such as attain the Assoc. degrees before transferring to universities	▪ HEIs provide transfer advice and information to students- transfer guides, equivalencies and special articulation programs.	▪ General Assembly of the State of Ohio, directed by the Ohio Board of Regents ▪ HEI Presidents appoint an Articulation Transfer Appeal Review Committee (ATARC) to protect students' rights. ATARC reports to the Presidents.
ARIZONA Arizona Transfer Articulation Agreements			
▪ State wide ▪ Facilitate seamless transfers for students – developed "Pathways for Transfer" guide	▪ Includes common block transfers; common courses; General Education Curriculum; 3 state wide transfer degrees. ▪ Appoint Transfer Student Ombudspersons	▪ Developing a new, more streamlined system	▪ State government.

KEY: HEIs – Higher Education Institutions.

Appendix D – A New College Charter: The Transition Plan

Portals and Pathways
A Review of Postsecondary Education in Ontario

A New College Charter
The Transition Plan

Investing in Students Task Force
February 2001

A NEW COLLEGE CHARTER
THE TRANSITION PLAN

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A NEW COLLEGE CHARTER
THE TRANSITION PLAN

Introduction

Ontario colleges are a success story for postsecondary education in Canada. In the 35 years they have existed, they have consistently provided accessible, affordable, cost-effective and high-quality education for students. The evidence of their success is in their increasing year-over-year enrolments and high graduate employment rates. It is in their strong track record of partnerships with business. It is in the countless ways they have benefited the communities in which they are located. Ontario colleges have become standard-setters in postsecondary education.

What will colleges look like as we move into the 21st century? Will they meet the challenge of global excellence?

This question has been the subject of discussion and debate since the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board released its report in March, 1999. The call for a "new college charter" in that report prompted research, investigation and consultation. During the mandate of the Investing in Students Task Force, discussions were held with many stakeholders in the college sector. The Task Force benefited from the work done by all stakeholders over the last 21 months, in that the information, advice and opinion offered to the Task Force was informed, practical and forward looking.

Based on these discussions the Task Force adopted an operating definition of a "new college charter" as the legislative, regulatory and policy framework that governs colleges. In setting out this framework, the "new college charter" will describe the boundaries and opportunities within which the colleges operate.

The Task Force found that there was remarkable consensus in support of the vision articulated in the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board for the role and mission of colleges for the 21st Century. However, the pathway to this vision was less certain.

The purpose of this paper is to provide the basis for understanding the nature and potential of this vision. There is a great opportunity to build on the success and strength of Ontario's college and look forward to the future. Over the next three years, with a careful and planned transition, all colleges will move forward to a new level of independence and responsibility. All colleges will find their pathway to excellence building on their unique strengths and circumstances to pursue their respective areas of specialization.

The Vision for Change

The Investing in Students Task Force is proposing this vision for change for colleges to support their important role in postsecondary education in Ontario. This vision for change is:

- High quality education and training;
- Flexibility in meeting emerging skill requirements driven by student and employer needs;
- Key role in economic development; contribution to sustainable prosperity;
- Global excellence measured by outcomes.

This vision will be achieved through:

- Promoting a culture of active and ongoing partnerships with the private sector;
- Using creative approaches to equipping people with skills;
- Increasing cooperation and collaboration between colleges and universities;
- Increasing specialization, including applied degrees and applied research;
- Continuing emphasis on access.

The "new college charter" is meant to be the framework that will align this vision with the appropriate governance and administration models to ensure success. Such a governance model needs to:

- Address the trends and demands currently facing colleges:
    - The need to be responsive and market-oriented;
    - Fully explore sources of revenue that are not student based;
    - Maintain a focus on the primary mandate of education and training;
    - Dealing with the layers of regulation, process and administrative controls;
    - The need to be competitive in a government controlled market.
- Fulfill the vision of the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board consultation and report:
    - Public and private partnerships;
    - Increased college/university cooperation;

    - Meeting the needs of students, including credit recognition and applied degrees.

- Meet the challenges for the future:

    - Increasing specialization and differentiation of each college;
    - Immediate enrolment increase;
    - Increased collaboration within the postsecondary sector.

When the Task Force prepared for discussions with stakeholders, there were several assumptions that provided guidance to the deliberations: recognition of the differentiated system, the need to set a broad capacity for the future and that there would be a single framework that allowed for differentiation, but would govern all colleges.

The Task Force identified possible governance models to determine which might be the most appropriate to fulfill the vision for colleges for the 21st Century. The models parallel those that were identified in an independent study commissioned by ACAATO. The Task Force selected models drawn from the realm of existing relationships that the provincial government has with partners that are involved in the delivery of public service. There is an established history and experience with these models that allows for ease of introduction and implementation. The models considered were:

- Current model – the *status quo* as a crown agency with a high level of administrative and management controls by the government;

- Enhanced Powers – the *status quo* with additional administrative and management powers as approved by the government;

- Evolution to a new entity operating within a charter framework – each college is a non-profit corporation operating under a common piece of legislation with roles and responsibilities identified in its statute;

- University-type charter – each college is a non-profit corporation with its own legislation;

- Private, for-profit model – this model is provided for under the new legislation, *Postsecondary Excellence and Choice Act, 2000.*

In the discussions held with college stakeholders, there was complete agreement that the *status quo* was not an option. Although there are a few advantages to the

Enhanced Powers model, it was regarded as a 'process solution' to nagging problems from the past that would help relieve some of the demands on the Ministry, but not a pathway for the new vision. The University-type charter was seen as untenable for the college sector. The Private, for-profit model was workable for new developments, but not for public education with public assets.

The new entity operating under a charter framework was seen as having the greatest potential for creating the pathway for the vision for the 21st Century. This form of college governance can acknowledge the differentiated missions of individual colleges while providing for a province-wide strategy for this part of the postsecondary education sector. It can provide the flexibility needed for colleges to meet their mandate in providing quality education, while being responsive to student, employer and regional needs. It enables full partnerships between colleges and business and colleges with other players in the postsecondary sector. It sets out clear expectations for performance, roles and responsibilities and can be the basis for a strong accountability relationship between the colleges and the Ministry.

Pathway to Future Success

The rest of this paper describes the pathway to the new vision. It will be an evolutionary process where key elements will need to be put in place; all the players need to become experienced at their new roles, and institutions need to build the necessary capacity to meet the new responsibilities.

This evolution will be done in a careful, planned transition and will occur over three years.

The first year will be characterized by assessing strengths and building capacity by:

- Articulating the new roles and differentiated mandates;
- Clarifying the responsibilities;
- Building the foundation for future success.

At the end of the first year, all colleges will have become more independent, and will have good administrative practices and accountability measures in place. The second and third year will see all colleges continuing to build their foundation strengths, but there will now be opportunities for individual colleges to pursue greater differentiation and specialization.

Careful and Planned Transition

Ontario colleges are a valued public asset and their success must continue. The transition will occur without major disruption to students and with attention paid to the specific capacity issues that must be developed.

A careful plan for transition will be developed that sets out the framework for the new college charter in legislation, regulation and policy. The governance models and administrative practices will be set out in this framework. In particular, there will be clear recognition of the contribution of employees to the success of the colleges. This transition plan will include the "end state" as well as the success factors to move to it.

The transition will be facilitated by the Ministry and supported as necessary by expert resources. The point of responsibility will be in a "Centre of Expertise" reporting to the Minister. In addition, colleges will have both the financial and expert resources available to them to assist them in evaluating their progress in transition and in taking the necessary steps to becoming the new entity. Having a single strong point of responsibility within the Ministry will be cost effective in that it will enable the colleges and the Ministry to avoid duplication and build on the learnings that occur during this period of transition.

In the Centre of Expertise, there will be professional and experienced advisors. These Special Advisors will offer an assessment of each college's capacity to meet the new roles and responsibilities. This assessment will identify the areas that may need to be strengthened in order to build the necessary capacity, and will include the strategies required to do so.

The Special Advisors will have expertise and experience in matters dealing with board governance, accountability, human resource management and labour relations. They will be able to provide advice on mergers or restructuring. They will also advise on the need to appoint an interim executive or transition board to oversee the implementation of the strategies for building the foundation.

The Minister would ask a Special Advisor to meet with every board of governors and college to make their assessment. The Special Advisor will make their assessment based on the necessary conditions for building the foundation and capacity to take on the new role and responsibilities. The Special Advisor will make a report to the Minister. The Minister will consider the report and take any action considered necessary. Each college will then have a plan, including strategies and mechanisms for building capacity. They can draw on the resources of the Centre of Expertise as appropriate in order to fulfill their obligations and responsibilities.

As a result of the transition activities, including collaboration, the areas for strategic investment will become clear. The necessary infusion of public funds will be done in a manner that is consistent with public goals and objectives, supports capacity building and ensures the future success of the sector.

There will be many strategies and mechanisms used during this transition in order to build capacity and facilitate differentiation and excellence:

- Identifying and sharing best practices;
- Enabling networks and players in the sector to lead by example;
- Tools and tips for self assessment of capacity;
- Tools and tips for system-wide assessment;
- Financial review and forecasting;
- Due diligence and assessment of risk and liabilities;
- Aligning mandates and enablers with missions.

The new college charter framework is not a continuum with a single end point. Rather, the framework allows for a spectrum of postsecondary education choices building on the strengths and leadership within the college sector.

- Some colleges will find their specialization in offering quality comprehensive programs for their region/community.

- Other colleges will serve a "community" that is not geographically defined, but sector specific.

- Some colleges will provide access programs to specific groups and special needs.

- There will likely be administrative collaboration and shared services that will enable colleges to work cooperatively on behalf of the students they serve.

- There could be new polytechnic institutes.

- There will be an increased number of transfer agreements and collaborative programs that will be focused on sectoral or strategic areas of education and training.

- Some colleges will provide programs offering applied degrees and focus on opportunities to pursue applied research.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Ministry

During the transition, the Ministry will build on its role of providing strategic leadership to the sector by:

- Communicating a province-wide vision for postsecondary public education, including publicly stated goals and objectives

- Establishing policies and guidelines for quality education and training in the college sector, including best practices for program development and expected outcomes for the benefit of students.

- Establishing an accountability framework that captures the principles of good governance, monitors achievement against public goals and objectives and allows for the introduction of policy initiatives and incentives to achieve public objectives.

- Setting out the information requirements in annual public reports, such as:

  - each college's mission, key strategies and accomplishments;
  - service commitment to students;

  - progress towards public goals and objectives as defined by performance indicators;
  - strategic human resource plan in support of the institution's mission;
  - audited financial statements and other reports that address the issue of financial stability and health of the institution.

- Providing multiyear funding for colleges that supports the province-wide vision and publicly stated goals and objectives, based on an annual review of institution business plans as they relate to their mission. The recommendations of the advisory board on the Transformation Incentive Fund will be included in the annual budget.

- Determining areas for strategic investment in the college sector that promote the public goals and objectives.

- Support the identification of best practices in key areas of program development and administration and sharing them with the sector.

- Facilitating collaboration on a regional and system-wide basis in support of the adoption of best practices that will benefit students.

- Facilitating collaboration and cooperation in aid of restructuring within the sector.

- Eliminating the Council of Regents as the employers' agent and transfer that responsibility to the colleges to determine their own agent.

The College

During the transition, colleges will move forward in their role by:

- Developing an institutional plan that identifies mission, goals and expected outcomes;

- Participating in the development of best practices in program development and expected outcomes for students. Some colleges will share their best practices (Sheridan proposal) and other colleges will need to enhance their capacity;

- Establishing the appropriate mechanisms, processes and staffing to meet the obligations for the accountability framework;

- Working with ACAATO on developing a thorough understanding of the principles of good governance and the proper requirements to fulfill director and fiduciary responsibilities.

- Establishing an annual business plan that outlines the college's:
  - mission, key strategies and accomplishments;
  - service commitment to students;
  - achievement against established performance indicators;
  - strategic human resource plan in support of the mission;
  - financial situation;

- Identifying opportunities for collaboration within the region or college system that results in benefit to students. These opportunities may be eligible for incentive funding;

- Working cooperatively on service delivery that may result in restructuring.

Building the Foundation and Capacity for Future Success

As the new college charter framework does not have a single end point, neither does this plan for evolution. Although this plan provides for the important transition years, once these elements are in place, colleges have the opportunity for continuous improvement and evolution driven by their success in meeting their mission and their students' needs.

The following characteristics of service and administrative functions can be considered the core characteristics of an effective organization. They are used here in order to focus the efforts during the transition in building the foundation for future success:

- Quality education and excellence
- Governance
- Human Resources
- Finance and Administration
- Partnerships

For each characteristic there is a brief description of the issues for change, introduction and improvement. There are mechanisms and strategies for building the foundation and capacity for all colleges. As some colleges seek to evolve further, there are success factors suggested in order to determine capacity and readiness for future change.

Quality education and excellence

Government provides a leadership role on program development and continuous improvement. There is a clear need for quality assurance for students and employers. The government will continue with the focus on outcomes and expectations to meet standards that the Ministry has established by KPIs, accreditation and the obligation of colleges to review program standards.

College Boards of Governors will assume responsibility for program development and review. Each board will establish mechanisms for program development and review that involves the input from all stakeholders according to best practice guidelines.

As identified in the Smith report, the defined geographic catchment areas do not affect student accessibility, but they do affect a college's ability to respond to individuals and businesses and to build on existing strengths. The Smith panel recommended "that government-defined catchment areas for colleges be abandoned." The Task Force agrees, particularly given the advances in on-line learning, and embraces differentiated missions for each college.

Strategies and Mechanisms for Building the Foundation

The Ministry can facilitate the development and sharing of best practices within the sector. All colleges have Program Advisory Panels of employer and community leaders. Some colleges have successful methods for program development and review that involve all the stakeholders in an effective and meaningful way. The Ministry can raise expectations for development and review by identifying the methods, approaches and strategies that are believed to be most effective.

Academic standards would be established and programs accredited by the Quality Assessment Board.

The Quality Assessment Board could foster quality benchmarks and results.

Over time, as the work on performance indicators and benchmarks continues to be developed in the postsecondary education sector, the government can require annual reporting against established benchmarks. Each college would include in its annual report to the public and government the measures it has taken to ensure that its program offerings are of a quality and standard that is sought by Ontario students and employers.

Success Factors for Further Evolution

- Results from both the student and employer perspective. The college consistently scores in the top in all of the KPIs combined.
- The college has a clearly stated Student Service Commitment and has established the means for ensuring the student focus is realized.
- New and innovative models of quality assurance involving stakeholders are developed in response to student and employer needs.

- The balance of programming provided is responsive to student and employer needs and comprises the necessary education and training in support of areas of differentiation or specialization.

- A track record of program collaboration with other postsecondary institutions, including both colleges and universities. It is a stated desire of the Ministry that there be greater effort at developing collaborative programs between the college and university sectors.

- Once the Quality Assessment Board is in place, any programs that are developed for applied degree granting purposes will be required to follow whatever policies, guidelines and criteria that the Board lays out.

- National or Sectoral recognition of excellence and achievement.

Principles of Good Governance

- The colleges continue as non-profit corporations as they are currently.

- The Board of Governors is responsible for the stewardship of the colleges and the establishment of a Student Service Commitment.

- The Board of Governors is responsible for defining the role and mission of the college, evaluating institutional performance, approving college plans, hiring the president, evaluating the president, establishing the college budget, providing fiduciary oversight and representing the community to the college and the college to the community.

- The boards will demonstrate the capacity to operate effectively. With a growing role and increasing responsibility, careful attention will need to be paid to establishing principles of good governance. The boards will be community based, not politicized and not captive to vested interests.

- When each college develops its mission and key strategies, it will be able to make reference to the province-wide vision for postsecondary education, including publicly stated goals. In so doing, the college will be able to connect its area of specialization to the broader picture province-wide.

There are many examples of guidelines and principles of good governance that can be adopted and modified for use in Ontario colleges. The American Association of Governing Boards and Trustees has conducted studies and developed statements of good governance. Individual provinces and states have spelled out roles and responsibilities in statute or regulation. The Toronto Stock Exchange has developed guidelines for corporate governance in publicly traded companies. The OECD has developed guidelines and descriptions of good governance models.

Generally, the responsibilities to be clearly addressed include:

- stewardship of the college and the public assets;
- appropriate systems to identify and manage risk;
- recruitment of the president, performance review and setting compensation;
- open communications with all stakeholders;
- assurances of quality and integrity of internal control and management processes;
- free of conflict of interest and established Code of Conduct;
- systematic and fair nomination and appointment of members;
- assessing board effectiveness;
- orientation for new members;
- the board should not be so big that it masks individual accountability of governors.

The membership of the board should be profiled according to the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to carry out these responsibilities. When a vacancy occurs, the objective of the recruitment process will be to fill the profile. One assessment of board effectiveness will include how successful the board has been at meeting the profiles.

ACAATO has successfully run an orientation program for governors that can be enhanced to address the new responsibilities of boards. In the first year, application could be made to the Transformation Incentive Fund in order to modify the program appropriately.

ACAATO, working with experts in board governance, can develop an appointment process that is a best practice for postsecondary education. This best practice for appointments will include methods for evaluating the performance of the board.

The government does not currently appoint members to the Board of Governors of colleges. The Council of Regents, as an agent of government, currently appoints external governors. With the elimination of the Council, it will be necessary for the government to determine an appropriate process. Since colleges do receive public funding, it would be advisable for the government to make appointments in proportion to the level of public funding. Public funding in the college sector overall is approximately 40% and the lowest amount of public funding provided to a single institution is 24%. Government appointments would not exceed 40% of the board and at a minimum would be 24%. Each board would elect its remaining governors. These proportions would change over time as funding levels change.

Success Factors for Further Evolution

- The operation of the Board will demonstrate all the principles of good governance.
- The Board appointment process will reflect best practice.
- The board will have established the mission and key strategies for the college and demonstrate their alignment and support of the province-wide vision for postsecondary education, including the publicly stated goals and objectives.
- The Board will have conducted an annual review and evaluation on its effectiveness and performance. The Board will have taken any corrective action necessary based on that evaluation.

Human Resources

As the Board of Governors takes on the responsibility of setting the strategic mission for the colleges, it is important that they develop a human resource strategy in support of that mission.

Each college will have a human resource plan that supports the goals of the organization and achieves excellence through people. The success of any organization is related to how effectively the organization develops it human resources.

The Board of Governors is the employer, as is currently the case. The college is the workplace. The Task Force has adopted the principle that the best employer-employee relationship is one determined by the parties.

The human resources plan will be comprehensive and will include all key elements of a strategic framework:

1. Leadership
    - Identifying core competencies
    - Succession planning
    - Professional development

2. Organization structure and work management
    - Organizational design
    - Work management and processes

3. Performance enhancement
    - Performance system, including reward, recognition and incentives
    - Training and development
    - Team development

4. Resourcing
    - Resource planning
    - Hiring
    - Retention
    - Variety of work relationships (suppliers, contract)

5. Relationship with employees
    - Internal communications
    - Employee/Employer relations
    - Employee Assistance Programs
    - Health and Safety

6. Compensation and benefits
    - Pay and benefits
    - Job classification system

7. Human Resource information
    - Systems for monitoring and tracking

Strategies and Mechanism for Building the Foundation

Colleges will need to be able to draw on expert resources to provide the advice and assistance to develop fully such human resource plans and the strategies for implementing and maintaining them.

Establish a Centre of Expertise of specialized human resource functions so that colleges do not have to duplicate common services. Services in the Centre can include:

- general information on best practices and procedures in human resource management and employee relations;
- research and conducting surveys on benefits and compensation;
- expertise in worker safety requirements;
- single source of training for needs that are common to the sector, either as a purchasing consortium or supplier;
- opportunity for collaborating on benefits;
- common pension pool that is held and administered centrally as is done now.

Adoption of best practices for fair treatment of all staff through such practices as:

- effective employee-staff relations committees with senior management commitment. This committee is the focal point for discussion, communication and feedback;
- open and constant communications with all staff through the use of employee satisfaction surveys, focus groups and information sharing sessions.

Success Factors for Further Evolution

- Demonstrate that a human resource plan that supports the mission and strategies has been developed and is in place. Key areas for success would be in attraction, retention and development of employees.

- Introduction of best practices for fair treatment of all staff.

- Results of employee satisfaction surveys, focus groups or other feedback mechanisms.

Finance and Administration

Colleges, like other public sector organizations, are greatly affected by in-year changes to operational grants or policy changes. Recent years have been difficult for even the best managed college to cope with changes in federal training purchases and significant in-year cuts to operating grants. Colleges have demonstrated resourcefulness and flexibility in responding to these changes.

Colleges need to be able build on existing budgeting and planning controls as well as administrative practices and processes in order to strengthen the performance orientation of the institution. This represents a move beyond compliance and reporting to being able to produce results and demonstrate outcomes – both financial and operational.

Each college must have the necessary financial and management information systems in place in order to prepare their annual public report. They must be able to report on:

- the institutions mission, key strategies and accomplishments;
- progress towards goals as defined by performance indicators;
- Student Service Commitment results;
- performance indicators reported for institution goals as well as system-wide goals;
- benchmarks that reflect the best practices in administrative operations including cost effectiveness;
- financial statements and other reports as required by the government.

Ontario will have a set of financial indicators that are derived from public audited information and considered to be good accounting measures for assessing the financial health and stability of an institution.

There are many opportunities for regional and system-wide collaboration in administrative operations. Many of the existing best practices identified by Ontario postsecondary institutions to the Investing in Student Task Force involved other public sector organizations within the community and region. Key areas for collaboration include:

- Information technology
- Insurance purchase
- Cooperative purchasing
- Common information systems for facilities management
- Sector benchmarking

Strategies and Mechanisms for Building the Foundation

The Investing in Students Task Force has developed an annotated bibliography of best practices from around the world as a resource document available to all postsecondary institutions.

The Investing in Students Task Force has compiled submissions from postsecondary institutions across Ontario on best practices in place in the province.

Once the common accountability framework is in place, each college can match their budgeting, planning and controls and administrative practices to the requirements of the framework.

It will be apparent from the financial health indicators where administrative collaboration will be most beneficial and needed. Colleges can use this information to determine opportunities for collaboration. The Ministry can use this information for beginning a discussion with colleges on opportunities for collaboration.

Strategic investments made by the government in the postsecondary education sector will support collaboration that will have the most benefit for students.

Success Factors for Further Evolution

Clear factors based on the kind of due diligence used in accounting and management professions for determining if any organization is well run and effective. Although there is no standardized means of assessing and comparing their "Financial Health" currently in Ontario, the Investing in Student Task Force has recommended that a working committee of expert professionals, institutional representatives and government develop indicators for use in Ontario institutions.

Still, there are some key measures that any review and assessment should be able to determine. Some examples include:

- A measure that demonstrates the level of entrepreneurial activity of the college;
- A measure of the planning and budgetary controls in place as well as the cash management policies;
- A measure of how much operating revenues are committed to the repayment of debt;
- A measure of sound administrative operations would be reflected in the cost effectiveness benchmarks.

Partnerships

The colleges will be able to realize the full potential of partnerships, including those with other public sector organizations in their region/community. Partnerships will bring many benefits: a means of securing revenue sources; access to state-of-the-art equipment and technologies; commercial spin-off of products of partnerships; and the opportunity for international marketing and promotion.

The success of partnerships is that they are of mutual benefit, long term in nature, and the interests of both parties are met. The challenge of successful partnerships is that the parties need the experience and expertise to solidify the arrangement and make it work.

Strategies and Mechanisms for Building the Foundation

Some colleges have been very successful at building partnerships at the local, national and international level. There is an opportunity to share best practices of how to create, build and evaluate the partnership arrangement.

The Investing in Students Task Force has developed an annotated bibliography of best practices from around the world as a resource document available to all postsecondary institutions.

The Investing in Students Task Force has compiled submissions from postsecondary institutions across Ontario on best practices in place in the province.

There needs to be adequate risk assessment methods and risk management strategies developed and in place. Organizations such as the Canadian Council on Public Private Partnerships can be a useful resource to the colleges and Ministry in identifying methods and strategies that have been proven to be successful.

Success Factors for Further Evolution

- A history of successful partnership arrangements with demonstrated benefits including:
  - college selected as a site for leading applied research;
  - additional revenue for education and training;
  - access for students and faculty to state-of-the-art equipment and technology for learning and research;
  - commercial spin-off potential of the products of the partnership;
  - international marketing and promotion of Ontario's excellent track record;
  - attraction of investment.

- A community/regional, economic, and social "Report Card", such as the one developed by Sault College, would provide an indication of the responsiveness of the college to the community and to business.

The New College Charter Framework

The transition begins with the development of the new college charter framework. The framework is made up of the legislation, regulation and policy.

The Legislation

- The broad mandate for colleges in Ontario, including their powers and objects.
- Colleges will continue as non-profit corporations, without share capital. They do not form part of the government or an agency.
- The Ministry will play a strategic leadership role and policy direction for the postsecondary system, including alignment of funding and incentives with college mission.
- Good principles of board governance will be clearly identified, including the participation of students on boards.
- The relationship of each college with the government will be described in an administrative agreement.
- Key principles and elements of accountability, including the annual report and the kind of information it should contain, as well as the provision for performance indicators and benchmarks.

The Regulation

- Each college will be incorporated in regulation under the New College Charter Act.
- Provides for the relationship of each college with the Ministry to be set out in an administrative agreement. This agreement will be periodically reviewed and renewed. Examples of such agreements exist in other ministries and can be adapted for use with colleges.
- Specific issues relating to the operating grant and reporting requirements that will be addressed in the annual public report.
- Requirements for the treatment and disposition of any publicly owned assets.

Ministry Policy

The Ministry will set policy for matters that are related to the province-wide vision for postsecondary education, including publicly stated goals and objectives. Such policies could include:

- accessible and seamless postsecondary education for qualified students;
- best practices in matters relating to quality education and effective organizations;
- principles of good governance and accountability;
- tuition fees and the student interest;
- establishing financial health indicators for use system-wide and on an individual institution basis;
- quality and service assurance during the transition;
- funding aligned with policy objectives.

The Transition Plan

	Building the Foundation for Future Success		Success Factors for Further Evolution
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Quality Education	Ministry guidance on Best Practices for program development and review	Development of Benchmarks	KPIs
			New and Innovative models
			Programs support mission
			Track record of collaboration
			Applied degrees
			Award winning/recognition
	Sharing Best Practices	Sharing Best Practices	
Governance	Establish Principles of Good Governance		Best Practices in evidence
	Board Profiles established and applied		
	Board Orientation developed	Board Orientation delivered	
	Student Service Commitment established		
	Board Appointment Process developed		

	Building the Foundation for Future Success		Success Factors for Further Evolution
	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
		Board Evaluation methods developed and applied	Evaluation conducted and corrective action taken
Human Resources	Develop Strategic Human Resource Plan		
	Establish Centre of Expertise		
	Share Best Practices		
Finance and Administration	Financial Management Systems	Financial Management Systems	Demonstrated evidence of good management systems and processes in place
	Cost Effective Administration	Cost Effective Administration	
	Financial Health Indicators		Results of Financial Health Indicators
	Administrative Collaboration	Administrative Collaboration	
	Strategic Investments	Strategic Investments	
Partnerships	Best Practices		Demonstrated Best Practices
	Risk Assessment and Management Strategies		
			Report Card

Appendix E – Overview of Proposals

Overview of Proposals

The Investing in Students Task force was launched in September to advise the Minister on ways that current and future funding can be focussed on quality services for students, and high quality education while ensuring access, affordability and accountability. As part of the mandate, letters were sent out to student organizations, faculty, employees, employers, institutions and community organizations requesting that they submit proposals that provide direction and momentum for system-wide change. We encouraged collaboration, resourcefulness and practical solutions.

The proposals received, along with the research that was commissioned and the Roundtable discussions shaped and informed the work of the Task Force. Although the Task Force did not make any financial allocation decisions, the Task Force did, in its final report recommend that many of the ideas proposed in the submissions be considered further in a variety of ways.

- We received 129 proposals from universities, colleges, students, businesses and community organizations.
- There were 30 proposals from Universities; 63 from Colleges; 9 joint proposals from colleges and universities; 4 from student groups and 23 from other organizations.
- 63 proposals involved collaboration of some kind (i.e., the proposals were made jointly from a number of universities, colleges and/or organizations). Of these proposals 25 involved collaboration between post-secondary institutions and 38 involved collaboration with other organizations (business, community, high schools)
- Most of the proposals identified initiatives that could have system-wide application
- Although many proposals addressed more than one area, the majority of the proposals covered the following areas:
  - General Administration
  - Facilities Planning and maintenance
  - E-Learning
  - Registration Processes and Practice
  - Ancillary Services
- The total amount of funding requested by all the proposals was approximately $175 million. However, most proposals identified benefits, savings or cost avoidance in the total amount of approximately $80 million.
- Approximately 20 percent of the proposals did not request any funding. They were submitted as examples of innovative ideas and best practices.
- Given the short timeframe and the large volume of proposals, the Task Force conducted a preliminary evaluation of the business cases presented in the proposals. It was noted that the majority of proposals did identify cost savings and benefits for students.

The summary listing of all proposals received by the Task Force are included in the ***Resource Document,*** a supporting document to the report

Appendix F – Overview of Roundtable Discussions

Overview of Roundtable Discussions

In the Task Force Terms of Reference, mandate number five identifies that "the Task Force will seek the views of students, postsecondary institutions, faculty and staff associations, local communities, business groups and other organisations as appropriate to ensure a broad, system level perspective is obtained."

In keeping with the objective to have system wide input to determine how accessible, affordable and accountable services are for students, the Task Force conducted a series of roundtable discussions, facilitated meetings, stakeholder meetings and student surveys to identify the opinions and experiences of key postsecondary education users and stakeholders.

Attendees

A total of **20 roundtables** were conducted from November 2, 2000 to December 13, 2000, with **168 participants** attending out of 404 invitations being extended to representatives of colleges, universities and external/community groups and associations.

By holding these roundtable discussions on thirteen topics related to the Task Force mandate, insights were gained from the following groups:

- **Colleges** were represented by a total of **76 participants**. (20 college students and 56 presidents, governors of boards and administrators)
- **Universities** were represented by a total of **71 participants**. (18 university students and 53 presidents, governors of boards and administrators)
- **Secondary Schools** were represented by **1 student**.
- **External** Community / Business Groups and External Postsecondary Education Institution / Associations were represented by **20 participants** from business associations, chamber of commerce (Francophone), banks, boards of education, parent councils, postsecondary student associations, etc.
- *Northern Colleges and Universities were represented by a total of 17 participants (7 University Representatives, 8 College Representatives, and 2 College Students).
- *Francophone Colleges and Universities were represented by a total of 36 participants (13 University Representatives, 12 College Representatives, 9 External Representatives, and 2 College Students).

* Northern and Francophone participants have been identified but counted only once as a college, university or external participant.

Methodology

Roundtable discussions were held in Toronto with the majority invited attending in person and several participating via teleconferencing (1) or video conferencing (9 students and administrators participated from Sault St. Marie, Ottawa, London, North Bay, and Thunder Bay). Several participants unable to attend sessions forwarded written responses. Roundtable discussions were held in English with Francophone stakeholders invited to participate in several French language roundtables. Facilitated discussions held separately from the roundtables were conducted in both French and English, in Toronto and the north and addressed Task Force related issues.

The summaries of the discussion at the 20 Roundtables and the list of participants is included in the *Resource Document*, a supporting document to the report.

Roundtable Number	Date	Roundtable Topic
1	November 2, 2000	Barriers/Opportunities Related to Task Force Mandate - College & University Students
2	November 8, 2000	Guidance Systems
3	November 9, 2000	Student Financial Assistance-A
4	November 9, 2000	Student Financial Assistance-B
5	November 14, 2000	Shared Services
6	November 22, 2000	Barriers/Opportunities Related to Task Force Mandate - College Students
7	November 22, 2000	Barriers/Opportunities Related to Task Force Mandate - University Students
8	November 24, 2000	Streamlining Mechanisms of Governance and Accountability - College Roundtable
9	November 24, 2000	Streamlining Mechanisms of Governance and Accountability - University Roundtable
10	November 24, 2000	Entry Portal
11	November 30, 2000	Accessibility/Affordability using Internet Processing Functions
12	December 5, 2000	Nexus Portal
13	December 6, 2000	Barriers/Opportunities Related to Task Force Mandate - Francophone Organizations - AM
14	December 6, 2000	Barriers/Opportunities Related to Task Force Mandate - Francophone Organizations - PM
15	December 6, 2000	Barriers/Opportunities Related to Task Force Mandate - Francophone Organizations - Noon
16	December 7, 2000	Digital Library/Bibliocentre
17	December 12, 2000	Accessibility/Affordability using Online Course Delivery
18	December 13, 2000	Mechanisms to Streamline Red Tape While Preserving Accountability - College Roundtable
19	December 13, 2000	Mechanisms to Streamline Red Tape While Preserving Accountability - University Roundtable
20	January 11, 2001	Northern Institutions - Colleges, Universities and External Organizations

Appendix G – Overview of Stakeholder Meetings

Overview of Stakeholder Meetings

The following represents a summary of the College, University and External Community/Business Group Stakeholders that the Task Force and Project Team met with from September 25, 2000 to January 11, 2001. As part of the Task Force's consultation track, 50 stakeholder meetings and facilitated discussions were held in addition to the 20 Roundtable discussions. Also, 800 student surveys were conducted during the same period.

Valuable insights and innovative ideas were provided to the Task Force through 50 stakeholder meetings and facilitated discussions. The stakeholders are grouped below into the following areas of representation: college, university, student and external stakeholders. Where stakeholders were from francophone institutions and/or from northern Ontario, they were counted once as either a college or university representative, but francophone and northern representation has been noted.

- **University Stakeholders (102) attended 20 meetings**
  - Council of Ontario Universities (COU) (includes Administrative and Financial Officer meetings)– 88 representatives at 11 meetings
  - University Representatives* – 14 representatives at 9 meetings
  - *University Francophone and/or northern representatives – 8 are included with university representatives

- **College Stakeholders (145) attended 25 meetings**
  - Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario (ACAATO)(includes Council of Regents meetings) – 120 representatives at 11 meetings
  - College Representatives* – 25 representatives at 14 meetings (this includes 23 College Presidents)
  - *College Francophone and/or northern representatives – 10 are included with college representatives

- **Student Associations (68) attended 6 meetings****
  - Canadian Federation of Students – Ontario (CFS-O) - 41 members at 2 meetings
  - Ontario Community Colleges Student Parliamentary Association (OCCSPA) – 19 members at 2 meetings
  - Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) – 8 members at 2 meetings

- **External/Community Groups or Associations (6) attended 2 meetings****
  - Aboriginal Stakeholders - 2 represented at 1 meeting
  - Francophone Community/Business Organizations – 4 represented at 1 meeting

The summary listing of the meeting details can be found in the **Resource Document,** a supporting document to the report.

. ** Some Task Force meetings were attended by more than one stakeholder category so some meetings may appear to be counted twice. There were a total of 50 stakeholder meetings